

257/85

L E T T E R S

ON A

T O U R

THROUGH VARIOUS PARTS OF

S C O T L A N D,

IN THE YEAR 1792.

By I. LETTICE, B. D. K

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. CADELL in the Strand.

MDCCXCIV.



P R E F A C E.

AS, within these last five and twenty years, several descriptions of tours, journeys, &c. performed in Scotland, have made their appearance, an apology may seem necessary for adding another to their number. Two or thrée of these works, it is well known, are so voluminous, and on account of the engravings which accompany them, as well as of their magnitude, so expensive, that few, except persons of fortune, can be supposed to have purchased them. The rest being of much less compass, have been also less comprehensive of matter; and the journeys which produced them, having been pursued in different parts of North Britain, or, in no instance, altogether in the same, the objects of each traveller have generally been different; at least the aspects, under which the same objects have been viewed, and the observations suggested by them can rarely have been alike; not to mention, that the form and arrangement of materials adopted in these several publications, great or small, have borne little resemblance to each other; so that, upon the whole, each work in succession may justly have claimed some share of novelty.

It is but too notorious, that the traveller of greatest name among those who have visited Scotland, both commenced and pursued his journey with strong prejudices against its inhabitants. Mr. Pennant, who preceded Dr. Johnson, and they who have followed him, have in general manifested no want of candor; but whether their accounts have risen to the full measure of justice, those particularly which regard a later and more advanced state of the country, may appear questionable. Be that as it may, a traveller from this side of the Tweed, setting forward on his journey without partiality or prejudice, and that so late as the summer of 1792, must have seen Scotland under so many circumstances of improvement and prosperity, as that his representations, if strictly just, cannot but be favourable. Under this predicament, the author of the following letters offers them to the public; not without some hope, that in the homage he has paid to truth and justice, he may have contributed his mite towards one end devoutly to be wished; that of rendering the *moral* as complete as the *civil union* betwixt the English and the Scots.

With regard to the execution of this performance, the writer desires to mention, that the plan of presenting his tour in the series of letters as first written from his minutes, must prevent any expectation of that formality of method, which a deliberate and profound research into customs, antiquities, laws, &c. would have required; whilst it admits a stile less solemn, and better suited to the nature of strictures; a sort of writing meant to convey information, as it were, by a single stroke or touch of the pen; which is all that a traveller almost continually progressive, or in motion, can successfully aim at; and,
with

P R E F A C E.

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with the exception of some remarks made afterwards more at leisure, and of passages from other authors, is all which these letters pretend to. But the writer may here, perhaps, be allowed to mention, that in order the more to discriminate his performance from others of like title, by the introduction of another species of matter, which might without violence have been connected with his tour, he had originally intended to intersperse some letters of biography; on the lives of certain Scotch literati, chiefly of the 15th and 16th centuries. They were to have been episodically inserted, each after that particular letter in the present series, which has described the place or vicinity, where one or other of these distinguished characters was born. The writer's friends have expressed some partiality for the letters in question, and some regret at their suppression; but it being found that, by their admission, this publication must have been extended considerably beyond its present limits, and the time of its appearance inconveniently delayed, a resolution was taken to lay them aside. Should, however, any circumstance arise to encourage the future appearance of these lives, they may be published with an addition of such a number more, as to make a second volume to this work. Although the additional lives should, many of them, want that episodical connexion with the tour, which those already written possess; yet their general relation to Scotland might make them no exceptionable sequel to these letters. The reader will find the places intended for some of the lives marked in short notes, in the course of the following tour*.

IF

* The number written is eight; which are those of Geo. Buchanan, Florence Wilson, Bishop Elphinstone, Henry Scrimgeour, Lord Napier of Marchmont, Bonaventura Hepburn, John Knox, and one of much later date. Could the writer of these letters be furnished with authentic and
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If the author may be allowed to add a few words more relative to the execution of his work, he would hint, that it has been particularly his desire to carry his reader with him into every scene he describes, and to make the whole face of the country, as it were, visible to the imagination. For this purpose he has been more solicitous to catch its characteristic features as he passed along betwixt one great town and another, than perhaps most former travellers. Others have fixed their attention chiefly on particular scenes; and such as, according to the ideas of landscape-painters, would be termed picturesque. These, in the present performance, have not been neglected; but to present the reader with the general aspect of the country, as it appeared to the traveller's eye upon each day's ride, has been much more his object; and to shew not only the time and season, but each successive place of his tour, *its form and pressure*; that so the reader may be almost persuaded that he himself exists and moves in each real and local circumstance, in which he finds the tourist and his companion actually moving, and persons and objects in motion about them, with which they happen to be engaged. This, it will be said, is something like an attempt to infuse substance, colour, life, and motion into verbal representation: Whether it has succeeded can only be determined by the reader's feelings. It may well be, that much more imagination is necessary for this task, than the writer has any pretension to; as it is certain likewise, that some portion of that faculty will be requisite to appreciate his success.

interesting materials for the lives of literary men, who have flourished in Scotland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and of some of those particularly who have made so brilliant a figure in the republic of letters, within these last thirty years, he would willingly undertake another journey to North Britain, in order to avail himself of the proper sources of such valuable assistance.

It

It may not be improper to take notice, that the fashion of quoting verses and other passages of different kinds, and in different languages, without naming their authors, though lately adopted by some respectable writers, has not been followed in the present performance. If this kind of omission be meant as a compliment to a reader's sagacity and learning, it might, perhaps, be better dispensed with; as, whenever the compliment proves unmerited, which must sometimes happen, it can occasion nothing but painful puzzling, or fruitless conjecture; and it may in time, not improbably give birth to an idle race of quoters at second hand, who will have the appearance of paying a reader this sort of compliment for no better reason than that they do not deserve it themselves. Another objection, and really a serious one to this practice of omitting name authorities is, that it may encourage misquotations, changes of words, misrepresentations of sense, and other tricks upon honest and well-meaning writers, much to their prejudice; and that sometimes for very reprehensible purposes. There are still other grounds upon which this complaint might be urged; but perhaps these may suffice to justify the letter-writer for having preferred the plain old way of acknowledging, to whom one is obliged. If the practice, here censured, shall be found in any instance to have occurred in the following sheets, it can only be attributed to inadvertence in the author, or the printer; which, it is hoped, a future opportunity may not be wanting to rectify.

THE author cannot conclude his preface without mentioning that he has, in his notes, been rather copious in the citation of latin passages from different authors, instead of referring his readers to the originals. If this be thought to have arisen from ostentation, the charge is absolutely disclaimed. Should it be thought to carry
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with it an air of pedantry, it may be answered, that as pedantry may be supposed to mean an awkward and intrusive affectation of teaching any thing out of time and place, it is not believed to apply justly to the present object: In one word, the writer is conscious of no other motive in it, than his desire to save trouble to his more learned readers.



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- FOR *badly* read *both*, p. 32. last line
- Read *Imagination* plurally, p. 75. l. 5.
- For *respected*—respectful, p. 76. l. 10.
- For *Mar* read Maxwelton, p. 104. l. 5. fr. bott.
- Dele *not* p. 130. l. 3. fr. bott.
- For *leaving*—reflecting, p. 206. l. 7.
- After *nightly* read *prey*, p. 268.—13
- Read *Archimedes*, p. 320. l. 7.
- For *et* read *ut*, lat. infer. p. 321. l. 9.
- For *drearful* read dreadful, verses p. 329. l. 2
- Dele *it* after *leave*, p. 332. l. 3. fr. bott.
- Read *cum salut affect*, p. 379. note, last words.
- Read *Peter*, p. 415. note
- For *higher* read *hither*, 439. l. 3.
- Read *Serimgeor*, p. 443. note
- In the passage from Pliny, *Æstate* and *Hyeme* must change places with each other, p. 446.
- Read *summittitur* for *summitur*, same passage.
- Dele *that*, p. 448. l. 7.

A
T O U R
THROUGH VARIOUS PARTS OF
S C O T L A N D.
L E T T E R I.

Carlisle, August 24, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

OUR arrival last night at Carlisle, was rather too late to allow of seeing any thing of it very distinctly; and our walk round the town, this morning, has brought little else to our particular notice than the cathedral, the castle, and the environs of the city.

CARLISLE is said to have been built many years before the incursions of the Romans into our island. Its situation, so near the borders of Scotland, frequently subjected it, in remote

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and

and uncivilized times, to all the devastations and calamities of war. After the departure of the Romans, who had been stationed at Carlisle, and had left Severus's wall, as a barrier at once to separate and defend it from Scotland, the Caledonians made a successful irruption; and reduced the city, which was considered as the fortress of that celebrated bulwark, to a heap of ruins. It was rebuilt toward the end of the seventh century, and a wall raised round it by Egfrid, king of Northumberland. In the two succeeding centuries it was, at different times, attacked by the Norwegians and Danes, and being left by them in a shattered condition, continued in ruins, till its castle and walls were repaired by Rufus about two hundred years afterwards. Henry I. made additions to the fortifications, and erected the church, begun by Rufus, into an episcopal see. Upon an invasion from the north, in the reign of Stephen, Carlisle fell into the hands of the Scots, but was recovered by his successor. The Scots retook it from John; but Henry III. reduced it again to the dominion of England. Edward I. during his contentions with Scotland, held a parliament

parliament here, and the place, in his reign, must have possessed considerable strength: for Wallace, the great hero of Scotland, his antagonist, after having reduced almost all the fortresses which the English had held in that country, marched to Carlisle, but besieged it without success. The successors of Edward I. conferred many privileges on this city, which its loyalty appears to have deserved; although, in the year 1745, it suffered, as it is well understood now, the most unmerited suspicion. Carlisle surrendered to the rebels, not from want of loyalty, for its inhabitants were well affected to government; but from being absolutely destitute of all necessary means of defence. But let me recollect that I have been diverting your attention from the cathedral, &c. which I brought into sight at the beginning of my letter.

THE architecture of this church is a mixture of the Saxon and Gothic; its massive pillars and arches being most in the stile of the former. The building is of a heavy aspect; but it had probably an air of more elegant magnificence in its entire state. Crom-

well demolished some of its members, to procure materials for his barracks. The east window, which backs the altar, is lofty, and very neatly painted; exhibiting too, a rich display of Gothic ramification. The choir, when we entered, were chaunting the psalms: neither good voices, nor musical skill were wanting; and devotion appeared, as it should do in the church of England, a solemn, reasonable, and pleasing service:

*Ergo limina templi
Lætus conspiciam tui*.*

THE castle is an antient, clumsy structure; but many circumstances have contributed to give it celebrity, as you may well conceive from the historical sketch, which I have given you of the city. Among others, the imprisonment of Mary Queen of Scots, should not be passed over in silence. Two large dismal rooms, each less than half lighted by a small iron-grated window or two, so placed as to command no agreeable object, where many might have been seen, were allotted to her

* Buchan, PS. 84.

use. In this situation she dragged the slow minutes of almost twelve months; though seconds are long, when captivity counts them.

THE different batteries of the citadel mount thirty pieces of ordnance, which salute the city and its neighbourhood on the king's birth-day, coronation, &c. and can a better use be made of them? The present military force of the castle consists of a gunner and a few invalids; the proudest of its martial days now are, when the county militia assemble to put on their regimentals, and all their host is mustered and drawn up in array within the area of the citadel.

THIS interior court presenting nothing, at this moment, to attach our curiosity, we are now mounting the roof of the castle, to view the extensive country, which encircles Carlisle within command of the eye. This prospect is agreeably variegated by neat villas, wooded inclosures, pasture, corn-fields and open meadows; and these are much enlivened by the bright confluence of the Eden, the Caude,

and the Petteril. All that we now see is sometimes, in wetter winter seasons, when these rivers overflow their banks, so entirely changed, as to present the city rising from the expansive bosom of a vast lake. From some of the villas, at the distance of a few miles, this scene cannot but have a very fine effect.

Noon.

WE are now some miles northward of Carlisle, and at this moment moving so gently forward, that, according to my practice in travelling, I can minute on my tablet any thing I see worth notice before me; as I do, not unfrequently, the remarks of intelligent persons, whom I happen to converse with on the road. I mention this circumstance, that you may understand me to be sometimes describing tracts of country, or other objects, the name or situation of which I am unable to give with precision, and may have no opportunity of learning on the spot. I may sometimes too, take note of an inconsiderable village, or somewhat about it, as I am passing through, where it may be inconvenient, or not worth while to stop, till particular names
can

can be accurately obtained, or my exact distance from any place of notoriety be known. Considerable places will, of course, be always specified.

HAVING quitted the more immediate environs of Carlisle, we have, for some time, been traversing an insipid extent of flat country, of a black boggy soil, with here and there a corn-field; but undiversified with wood, or human dwellings, till we catch sight of the great fir-plantations, and scattered farms of the late Dr. Graham, around Netherby, and in the neighbourhood of Longtown. These, together with that town, which we have just left behind us, built upon his estate, and chiefly under his auspices, bear testimony to that vigorous spirit of improvement, for which that gentleman was celebrated. We should have been much gratified, had our time allowed us to visit every corner of that vast tract, so lately a barren waste, now drained, inclosed, and divided by its late respectable proprietor, into some hundreds of farms, with each its house, and every appendage requisite for the comfortable maintenance of his

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tenantry,

tenantry, and for the cultivation of his ground; the whole, under enlightened inspection, daily advancing to prosperity. At Longtown there is a charity-school for sixty children, a regular weekly market, and occasional fairs for the convenience of the tenantry of Netherby and its vicinage. I might have mentioned too, its manufactory of coarser woollen cloths.

IN a region of borderers, not many years ago, characterised by wildness and barbarity, such cultivation and establishments as these, the happy means by which instruction, mutual intercourse, confidence, profit and comfort, have been, in so many respects, consulted; not to mention a regular, active, and summary administration of justice, dispensed, at the smallest cost, in the different manor-courts instituted throughout the domain, have altogether wrought a wonderful change in the manners, habits, and welfare of a numerous and increasing race of peasantry. When we consider the enlarged views, and multiplied operations, by which so many social benefits have been obtained, the tame phrase of Dr. Graham's improvements, as they are commonly

monly stiled, falls much below their merit. For the country itself, in a civil light, and the inhabitants, in their social and moral state, may justly be called "the work of his hands."

VERY soon after we cross the confines of this new creation, that dun, dreary bog, known by the name of Solway Moss, comes, far and wide, upon the eye, and wearies patience itself with its irksome and extensive sameness, till relief surprises the traveller scarcely less than the fugitive lover, in the sudden appearance of Gretna Green.

THAT which first strikes the eye, is a small portion of the village, newly built, projecting forward on the brow of an elevated hill, and just peeping out of the tufted groves, which envelop the rest in their shades. There is something in the "coup d'oeil" of this Paphian retreat, now about a mile before us, singularly calculated to flatter the imagination, which adventurers, posting hither in the cause of love, may be supposed to possess in no inferior degree. The advanced position of those introductory habitations, expresses such
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an air of invitation and welcome to the woody asylum beyond them, as I confess, impressed myself, a mere traveller, impatient of nothing but a disagreeable road, with very pleasing ideas.

Gretna, Afternoon.

THOUGH sanguine anticipation is commonly obliged to make many abatements on closing with its object, fewer were requisite on our arrival at Gretna-hall, (the name of our inn) than experience justifies in similar cases. Whether, in a moral view, the case of those fond beings, who desert the warm protection of their homes, and the wise counsels of parental foresight, in their hasty sacrifices at Hymen's Caledonian altar, may not too frequently verify the foregoing observation, must be left to their own feelings and confession. Suffice it to say for ourselves, on the account of our inn at least, and the entertainment it afforded, both were excellent. To a lawn of some acres, bordered with lofty fir-trees, in front of our inn, formerly the mansion of a gentleman, the village of Gretna owes the additional appellation of "Green."

WHILST

WHILST I am casting a look over this celebrated spot, with which are associated the ideas of a thousand love-adventures here brought to that crisis, which generally determines, for life, the happiness or misery of the parties engaged in them, I cannot help thinking, that some of our superior novelists would not be ill-employed in possessing themselves of the leading characters and events, which have distinguished the more remarkable of these rash connexions. A judicious collection of materials from this abundant source of action, the romance of real life, represented under fictitious names, and comprized in short tales, would furnish no contemptible fund of instruction for young persons in this age of liberty and adventurous experiment. It might tend also to bring to decision, the true merits of that act of parliament, which many, perhaps unjustly, have conceived as owing its origin more to an aristocratic spirit jealously guarding its own advantages and distinctions, than to motives of public good.

THE most recent adventure, occasioned by the restrictions of this law, was concluded at
Gretna,

Gretna, not many weeks ago, and is still a subject of conversation. I mean the elopement of Miss Th— with Captain B— This incident is too new at present, for the purpose here recommended. When time has melted it, the subject will be interesting, and, well handled, may become pregnant with moral instruction.

You will not be displeased with the story of two old gentlemen who, some years ago, met at an inn on the North Road, the one in pursuit of his son, the other of his daughter, both some miles before them on the wing to Gretna Green. The two fathers equally averse to the union of the young people, mutually vented their regrets and reproaches at this unexpected interview; each accusing the other of wanting that vigilance, or authority over his own child, which might have prevented their thoughtless expedition. After some time spent in this unseasonable altercation, they recollected, that, since their own arrival, the lovers had proceeded some miles in addition to those, which they had already advanced before them. Each demanding a
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post-chaise to continue the pursuit, the landlord informed them, that he had only one at their service. As time was equally precious to both, our travellers agreed to share the carriage betwixt them. You will easily imagine what "agreeable companions" they were in a post-chaise. Considerations of economy however, and the opportunity of continuing their mutual reproaches, reconciled them to one carriage for the rest of their journey. On they trundled for some successive posts; ill humour and high words increasing with every turn of their wheels. When they arrived at Longtown, their last station to Gretna Green, neither carriage nor horses were to be procured. The lovers, two hours before, had engaged the only one in the town and meant to detain it for their return. The horses, which had brought the old gentlemen to Longtown, had been obliged to come the two last posts without stopping, and were so entirely jaded and fatigued, as to need both refreshment and rest before they could be driven on farther. The travellers scarcely less exhausted, and compelled to continue some time where they were, consented to make the
best

best use of it in recruiting their strength and spirits by recourse to the larder and a bottle of wine. The serious business of the moment diverted their thoughts from contumelious reflections. In the interval of silence, which almost necessarily took place, whilst the organs of speech were engaged in mastication, they began, after a little calculation, to perceive, that it would be impossible for them to overtake the young people before Vulcan* had forged their hymeneal chain. The refreshment of food and wine had now somewhat cheered their hearts; a better humour succeeded to unavailing reproach; they coolly discussed the circumstances of the case, and at last shaking hands concluded with a resolution of staying, where they were, to give their blessing to the happy pair on their return.

* A blacksmith at that time was the performer of the marriage ceremony.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R II.

Moffat, Aug. 26, 1792.

ON quitting Gretna Green, we found ourselves not more geographically, than characteristically, in Scotland. The smallest national differences striking at first sight, which would scarcely be noticed after some familiarity, I suffered few, which presented themselves, to escape my minutes; because, on these occasions, I know you think the most trivial circumstances not without their value. To the imagination they certainly are not, although the traveller's eye must often be supposed to have fallen only on the superficies of objects: nor will judgment prize them less, where opportunity may not have been wanting to penetrate below their surface, and to investigate the causes of national character. Some motive or other, however, often occurs to hasten the traveller's progress, and puts this advantage out of his power. But may not a rapid Rambler sometimes collect facts
and

and appearances worthy of exercising the philosophy of sedentary thinkers ?

WE entered North Britain by Annandale, in the county of Dumfries* : The whole face of the country, on either side of the road to Moffat is hilly, but not mountainous, and, with little exception, appears green. The general scene was pasture ; broken up, however, here and there, into potatoe grounds, and lands of oats and barley. But the latter articles, not yet verging decisively toward their tint of maturity, do not perceptibly vary the universal appearance of verdure. Now and then, as we proceeded, large plots of turf-soil and their black produce, piled up in formal heaps, gave contrast to particular spots by their gloomy ugliness. Cottages, ill built and worse thatched, were thinly scattered about. Farm-houses, in a stile even superior to the generality of those more southward, but not numerous, gave relief to our prospects. Cottages sufficiently collected to constitute what we should call a village, or even

* See Campbell's sheet map.

a hamlet, are rare for many miles. Almost every little dwelling, we saw, has its folding-door; not, you will suppose, from any affectation of elegance, which that circumstance sometimes announces with us; but that half the aperture of the common entrance may continue closed, except in cases of necessity, to exclude, as much as possible, the winds and beating rains, to which the western side of Scotland is much subject.

At Ecclesfechan, a small town through which we passed, famous for its monthly sales of black cattle, the street was full of the peasantry of the neighbourhood; men, women and children making their bargains at the stalls, or otherwise amusing themselves in the afternoon of one of their fair-days; its principal business at this hour being over, and the Cumberland chapmen retired. The Scots bonnet and plaid furtout, worn by the men; the short jacket and petticoat of two different colours, and the square chequed wrapper or cloak, the covering of the more ordinary women, prevailed in the dress of the elderly people: the younger persons, of

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both sexes, shone in a taudry imitation of their southern neighbours. The men's outward dress, or furtout, is a thick stuff of small-checked plaid, blue, or green on a white ground; and is commonly made in the Lowlands, like a rocquelaure. It is, unless in bad weather, either drawn up round the middle of the body, or hung negligently over the left shoulder with no ungraceful air.

ALL, that we could farther observe, in merely passing through the croud, was, in general, a shrewd solemnity of visage, not wanting good humour; and, in more juvenile faces, not without simplicity. This last trait, however, amiable as it is, cannot be expected to mark the countenance very strongly after maturer years, among those, whose vocation is minute bargaining.

ALL round Ecclesfechan, and for some miles indeed before we reached, as well as after we had passed it, we saw numberless large herds of black cattle and galloways, which at this season continually descend from the northern mountains, occupying the pastures

tures on our road's side, and snatching their hasty meal, as they journey to the fairs of South Britain. Each herd is conducted by a Highlander completely dressed in his national garb, accompanied by his brindled dog, of the true shepherd race; as sagacious, docile, and adroit an animal, as retains to the service of man. It is amusing to see something of order and discipline in the movement of eighty, or a hundred head of cattle, under the skilful manœuvres of a single herdsman and his dog. When the herds are larger, more attendance is allowed for conducting them. Few of these migrating cattle are bred in the Lowlands; but the small breed of sheep, of which such numbers are every year sent among us to be fattened, was originally produced and reared in these lower countries; though it is now spreading apace over the Highlands, much to the present discontent of the inhabitants. The reason of their murmurs will appear hereafter.

Wood being very scarce, and hedge-rows almost unknown in this part of Scotland, walls neatly reared of living fods of earth,

with alternate layers of stones or pebbles, broad at the bottom, and narrowing to a sharp ridge at the top, form the only inclosure of corn, or pasture lands. Although these walls, from their lowness and precise regularity of form, fail to break the country into those picturesque varieties of shape and colour arising from hedge-rows with large forest trees interspersed, they are infinitely less harsh and unpleasant to the eye, than the naked stone-fences, rough and uncemented, which we saw in the unwooded parts of Westmoreland and Cumberland. Notwithstanding one half of these Annandale fences consists of stone, the verdure of the sod completely covers the whole, a short time after the structure is raised.

ON the subject of rural œconomy, as strangers in this country, we could not but observe the practice of setting up their hay in a number of small ricks, each about a cart-load, when the grass is become as dry as the climate will admit of; in order that it may contract the necessary heat, and have time to evaporate it, before the crop is brought home
to

to be thatched in the rick-yard, or deposited under cover for winter's use. In this preparatory state the husbandman suffers it to remain for several weeks. Hay not completely ripened, and seldom got up quite dry, could not at first be gathered into stacks of large bulk without danger of its taking fire. The frequent appearance of these rokes, as they are here called, (although the hay harvest is yet not more than half finished) collected together in one corner of the inclosed fields produces an effect of character on the face of the country remarkable to a stranger, and by no means disagreeable. This practice, which we understand, to prevail throughout all North-Britain, has arisen undoubtedly from the nature of a climate subject to such degrees of cold or humidity, as prevent the crops from ripening sufficiently to be cut, before the summer is far advanced; if indeed they can often be said to arrive at perfect maturity.

WE finished our ride yesterday afternoon (August 25,) at Locherbie; a little market-town without consequence, or pretension; about seventeen miles from Gretna Green.

A walk over the place furnishing nothing worthy of remark, we retired to our inn; where a poor woman with her young family, opposite our window, attracted our notice, as they were removing within doors a load of turfs, shot from the street. The joyous shrugs and comic gestures of the young ones, their skipping and capering about the heap of fewel, succeeded by a very lively and nimble application of hands, arms, fire-shovels and broken-platters to the business of carrying it within, and, at the conclusion, a thrifty sweeping of the smallest particles that had crumbled from the turf, convinced us how acceptable, even indifferent fewel is in a cold country, and how doubly welcome to those, who, with difficulty, find means to procure any at all. It was impossible not to partake the gladness of this humble scene. I should not, however, have thought it worth describing, though I fear the poverty which it announces, may be classed among the characteristics of the place and its vicinage, had I not considered it as another proof of the opinion, you have always strenuously maintained, that the acquisition of the bare necessities

cessaries of life causes greater happiness to such as are scarcely able to obtain them, than the enjoyment of the highest luxuries to those, who seem to command the world at their will,

THE South Briton, upon first entering this country, when one considers him as, in some measure, acquainted with the custom I am going to mention, by having passed the villages of the bordering counties, is too apt to express his surprise, and sometimes to divert himself contemptuously at the sight of the lower classes of the Scots patiently dispensing with the use of stockings and shoes. If a London sybarite were suddenly dropped into Scotland from a balloon, a transient smile of surprise would find its excuse in his ignorance; but any thing like the sneer of deliberate contempt on witnessing the necessities of our fellow creatures, is itself contemptible, illiberal, and unmanly: such persons however there have been in all times, or the poet had not had occasion to exclaim——

*Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit——*.*

* Juvenal.

But surely we moderns, so given to boast of our moral refinements and superior philanthropy, should know how to behave ourselves better. A little reflection however cannot but inspire a modest traveller, who professes to read the open volume of the world for instruction, with sentiments of respect, instead of ridicule, for the practice I am speaking of. A chearful submission to that unseen hand, which deals not every thing alike to all, and an indifference to the common wants of mankind claim no inferior praise. This instance of Scottish patience and hardihood should rather mortify our own tenderness and effeminacy, than prove a motive to our contempt. That manly steadiness and dignity of character, so commonly expressed in the countenance of the North Briton, probably results, in some degree, from his consciousness of ability to dispense with those conveniencies and accommodations in his modes of existence, which other people exert so much industry and so many vile passions to obtain.

AFTER we had left Locherbie behind, we found ourselves upon an excellent road, and
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in a district not ill-cultivated, considering its thin population. When we were advanced about ten miles, the road, which ran on the declivity of some lofty wild hills, affording pasture for sheep and much cover for game, commanded, on our left, a succession of pleasant meadows, with a trout stream meandering through them, overhung, on the side opposite to us, by a beautifully wooded shore and green projecting banks reflected from the water. This scenery brought us to some extensive plantations surrounding a handsome mansion, at present in the possession of Dr. Curry of Liverpool; possibly induced to occasional residence here by the mineral fame of Moffat.

PASSING the river which flows by Dr. Curry's grounds, we reached the town, consisting of houses not ill-built, but all turned with their gable ends to a large pleasant area; the market place. Cottages of meaner construction running in a line with these superior edifices, and forming streets behind them, make up the town; a place of some bustle on various accounts. The poorer people are employed in manufacturing coarse woollen stuffs,
chiefly

chiefly plaids of small checquer work; a sort I mentioned above, of more elegant and less glaring patterns than those made in the Highlands. The better order of inhabitants are partly supported by disposing of the produce of the loom, and partly by letting accommodations to invalids; the rheumatic, the scrophulous, the hypochondriac, or the idle; the last most numerous of the three. Indeed without this useful tribe, with whom all waters agree, though their case is helpless, few of these places would prosper. But such, candidly disposed to avail themselves of the beneficence of nature in all her forms, are attracted alike by fresh water, or by salt, by the cathartic, the diuretic, the attenuant, and de-obstruent, Whether alkalis, or acids, constitute their predominant qualities is of little consequence to those, who resort to these amusing spas, with much less hope of curing themselves, than of killing time. But the principal movement of the town of Moffat, during our short stay in it, arose, as we understood, it generally does, from the continual passage of travellers to and from Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dumfries, &c. who keep a large inn very
much

much alive both day and night. The many successive arrivals and departures of various rank and figure, in carriages, on horseback, or on foot, the constant scene before our window, helped considerably to cheer a very dark and rainy day. We had frequent occasion to admire the unconcerned hardiness of idle spectators, and of persons stopping each other in the market place, to converse during the heaviest showers of rain. Women too, and some not of the lowest class, without hat or bonnet, we saw in conversations tête-à-tête, discoursing with as much earnestness, as if perfectly insensible of the weather. These good people unaffected and unhurt by a humid and inclement atmosphere, and remarkable, I may add too, for bearing with indifference, sudden transitions from heat to cold, enjoy, in these respects, an enviable advantage over ourselves. Though no people love better to be warm and snug in their houses and cottages, than the North Britons, no other in Europe perhaps will be found, who meet the severest cold with more patience and resolution.

THOUGH

THOUGH nothing would, at present, be more unjust than any insinuation to the political disadvantage of Moffat, this town was, in the year 1715, the scene where lord Kenmuir erected the standard of rebellion in favour of the chevalier St. George. Here that nobleman joined lord Derwentwater with two hundred horse; when the latter, after having proclaimed the Pretender at Alnwick, Warkworth and Morpeth, was retiring into Scotland before general Carpenter, to re-inforce his troops; an ill-omened expedition, which, in its issue, brought these two distinguished persons, men of worth apart from their disloyalty, to a tragical end on the scaffold.

LETTER

L E T T E R III.

AS, in my last letter, I professedly meant to seize such characteristic objects and prominent circumstances, as immediately struck me on entering North Britain, you would undoubtedly expect me to mention what effect my ear experienced on first hearing the Scottish dialect, accent and pronunciation of that, which, in a liberal sense, may be termed our common language. Give me leave to supply that omission in a short letter, confined to the subject.

ALTHOUGH there are few of the natives of Great Britain, however remotely situated from this northern portion of the island, if they live in any commerce with the world, who have not occasionally heard the Scottish dialect; yet still, when it happens first to them to hear every one they meet, using it, they will not fail to be more sensible, how much it differs in sound from the idiom, to which their ears have been accustomed. The
native

native of a central county of England, like myself, would need no effort to discriminate the slightest shade of difference.

WITH regard to the accent, it is needless to say, that by it is meant here, that which is somewhere defined by Prior, "a national modulation of the voice according to the passions, or sentiments."

EVERY living language has its own distinct accent in the mouths of those, to whom it is vernacular. Of all the guttural accents, which I have heard in different parts of Europe, the Scottish is at least the boldest. There is in it too a kind of simplicity, or naiveté, which, to most strangers, is agreeable in conversation. More time, it may be, is requisite to render it equally pleasant in the reading either of prose, or verse. But what right has any particular nation to arrogate to itself a preference in this matter? For this, or that particular accent, if not entirely the effect of natural causes, is the result of national habit; either of them equally difficult to be altered, if they really ought to be distinguished. It is probable

ble, that whatever is spoken or read experimentally to any man, as the native of a particular region, is to him most agreeable and expressive in his own national accent: and that, as some think, even if the experiment be made in a foreign language. Though perhaps no accent is, upon the whole so agreeable, or expressive to any ear, as that to which it has been accustomed from the cradle; yet it has been thought by some learned men, that the accent of one language is naturally better adapted, than that of another, to certain purposes. Sir George Mackenzie, in his "Essay on what Eloquence is fit for the Bar," speaking of the Scottish idiom and its "pronunciation," by which it is apprehended he certainly meant its accent, says: "It may seem a paradox to others, but to me it appears undeniable, that the Scottish idiom of the British tongue is more fit for pleading than either the English idiom or the French tongue. For certainly the pleader must use a high, smart or quick way of speaking, whereas the English, who are a grave nation, use a too slow and grave "pronunciation," and the French a too soft and effeminate one. And therefore,

therefore, I think the English is fit for haranguing, the French for complimenting, but the Scots for pleading. Our pronunciation is, like ourselves, fiery, abrupt, sprightly, and bold, &c.—”

WITH regard to pronunciation, which should properly be confined to the sound or power of letters and to the formation of syllables, that of the Lowlanders of North Britain, whose speech alone is now in question, agrees much more as to its vowels with that of all the nations in Europe, the Ice Landers excepted, than that of their Southern fellow-subjects on this island. And it seems a common opinion, that the Lowlanders of North-Britain approach nearer to the antient Greeks and Romans, in this respect, than the English.

THEIR use of the consonants differs very little from our own, unless some few of them be pronounced with a rougher aspiration. Something like the German sound of the *ch* and that, even in words, of which body
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these letters do not make part*, frequently struck my ear on the eastern side of Scotland. But all prejudice apart it may well be conceived, that if the English and Scottish pronunciation of our common language (I speak not now of the accent) were addressed to the ear of a continental foreigner, equally a stranger to both, the power of analogy would probably determine his preference to the latter.

LASTLY, as the “dialect†” of Scotland is not the written language of Great Britain, it will be acknowledged on all hands to want one manifest advantage; nay that, which will always, on the whole, give a decided preference in the case of language. And indeed the singular ability and success, with which

* *Brought* and *light* and some other words ending in *ght* are pronounced “brhoucht, lhicht,” &c.—with a harsh aspirate.

† I recognised in it a great number of Danish words, which persons, unacquainted with that language, have probably taken for local, or provincial barbarisms. That the Danes should have left much more of their language in the north than in the south of Britain is easily accounted for by the smallest acquaintance with northern history.

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the Scottish literati themselves have, for these thirty years past, cultivated our proper and common English in their writings, has not a little contributed to establish its superiority over their own dialect, in grammatical precision, elegance and harmonious construction, and helped to recommend it to the study of all the politer people of Europe.

FROM the three-fold light, in which I have spoken of the Scottish tongue, you will naturally imagine, that it affected me forcibly, in a characteristic sense, when I heard it at first generally spoken in the country ; not, however, you will as easily believe, with any sentiment of ridicule ; but only as an organ for the mutual communication of ideas strikingly different from that, which I had been used to ; and, as such, no unentertaining subject of literary speculation ; but I could never forget the respect due to it as answering all the more useful purposes of any language whatsoever, to the natives of one part of our island, and those distinguished by every quality, which can render civil society most respectable.

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FROM a certain reserve, which we remarked, during the two or three first days of our journey in the masters of our inns, (an order of men in Scotland generally well informed,) and most other persons, with whom we appeared desirous of conversing, we conjectured, that it has probably been too much the custom of our younger travellers from the south, to ridicule what we, vulgarly enough, call the Scottish brogue. Two or three days familiarity with it, and perhaps a little reflection on the illiberal levity of such conduct, suffice, we supposed, to teach better manners; for, as we proceeded farther, we found this shyness towards us wear off, and had continual occasion to admire that ingenuous and manly freedom, so well becoming the proverbial soundness of a Scottish understanding, with which the natives of North Britain naturally converse.

It is much to be regretted, that young travellers should be so blind to their own advantage, as, in any part of their progress through an interesting country, to defeat their best purpose, the acquisition of knowledge, by a

puerile ridicule, the tendency of which is to close against themselves many valuable sources of information. But that which inclines me the more to lament this reproachable levity is, that, as far as it operates, it has, with other causes not more to our credit, the very serious effect of retarding that moral union between two brave and generous nations, so long civilly blended into one, and united by a thousand ties of literary, commercial and political intercourse. We are all Britons from the land's end to the Orkneys, have all the same boasted constitution, the same laws, liberties and christian religion to defend; and God forbid, that names or sounds, affectation, illiberality or prejudice should prevent the natives of Kirkwall and Penzance from regarding each other, as Britons and fellow-citizens.

LETTER

L E T T E R IV.

Hamilton, Aug. 27, 1792.

IN pursuing our route from Moffat to Hamilton, we stopped at a lone house, called Elwan's Foot, in the parish of Crawford. In a conversation with an intelligent person whom we found there, I learned something on the subject of agriculture in this part of North-Britain. He lamented much its backward state in most of the districts of Lanerksire. The want of population and the general poverty of this region, were, I found, among its leading causes. But he thought it more immediately to be attributed to an avaricious custom of uniting many small farms together, which had, in a great measure, extirpated that useful branch of national peasantry, the farming cottagers. That, said he, pointing to a large house within sight, was formerly the mansion of a family of consequence. It has for some time been converted into a farm-house, and

its present occupant has, within a few years, in order to enlarge his own business, managed to dispossess seven or eight dependent cottagers, who from father to son, had maintained themselves comfortably, brought up their children with decency, and given them a useful education. These cottagers, who had been increasing the population and prosperity of the country, being turned adrift found no other resource, at least for their children, than that of sending them to the great manufactories. This, however, is but a single case among many. Manufactories being usually established in towns, young people, thus disposed of, lead too commonly a single life; partly from corruption, and partly from necessity. A diminished population ensues; extensive farms, and even the few remaining cottages, are occupied too much by graziers; vast tracts of waste land are left without improvement, to feed what cattle or sheep, they may, by their natural produce, and the general state of agriculture greatly suffers from the scarcity of labourers. The hands now left are chiefly employed to cultivate for the great farmers, who complain
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of the rise of wages ; and the generality of the country continues unimproved, which a more populous peasantry, by this time, would have brought into a flourishing condition of tillage. These observations are probably well founded, and but too applicable to many other parts of the kingdom. That rage for growing hastily rich by manufactures, which often manifests itself in towns and cities, surrounded by poor and half-cultivated countries, must, in process of time, defeat its own purpose. If such places cannot be served with necessary provisions, but at prices continually increasing, it is obvious, that the poor artificers, employed in their fabrics, must raise their wages in order to subsist ; and as improvements in machinery, to diminish the quantity of labour on a given quantity of materials, can probably be carried little farther, either in point of number or perfection, the price of manufactures must, in such situations rise, and will continue to do it, till at length it will be difficult, and often impracticable, to find markets, where other countries will not be able to undersell the manufacturers in question. The west of England, has already,

dy, in some degree, furnished proof of the consequences here insisted on. But to return to the topic of agriculture, the complaint made by my informer, is by no means to be admitted without exceptions; though these are not sufficiently numerous to obviate the justness of his observations upon the whole. There being in Scotland, and particularly on this western side, vast tracts of waste land, much of which is unfit at present even for the pasturage of sheep, a practice gains ground, though somewhat slowly, of setting them out into portions called "feus," by which are understood lands let upon long leases; usually of ninety-nine years. A valuable consideration is advanced by the tenant, when the engagement commences, and a small annual quit-rent only is exacted during the whole course of the term. This plan cannot but prove conducive to the welfare of the country, wherever adopted. A species of occupancy, so nearly approaching to proprietary right, and that for so considerable a period, gives warm encouragement to industry and exertion, and thereby lays the best foundation of a regular and enlightened state of
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of agriculture, and, in the result, of a long train of economical and commercial advantages, sure to be communicated to every branch of civil society. We heard the patriotism of the Duke of Buccleugh mentioned, with much distinction, on this subject. But instances occurred in the course of inquiry, where the avarice of great landlords had not resisted the temptation thrown in their way by more opulent and enterprizing tenants, of portioning out their feus on much too large a scale for the benefit of the community, and, at the same time, of limiting them to a much shorter term of years.

ALTHOUGH it is observable, that governments leave inconveniences and evils of this nature generally to remedy themselves, and probably for better reasons than uncandid murmurers are willing to assign, it may be questioned, whether the interference of the legislature in the division of large tracts of waste lands into new farms, so far only as to prevent an unmanageable extent of ground from falling into one hand, might not prove a very salutary restraint. But to reduce such a measure

sure to general practicability, unless it were to originate in the patriotic views of many great landlords at once uniting to promote it, may easily be supposed no easy matter. Whatever difficulties, however, may arise from the avarice and selfishness, either of landlords or of tenants against the imposition of legal restraints in this case, it will at once be agreed, that a wise man intending to purchase new lands for his own cultivation, will not hesitate to adopt the sentiment of an elegant Georgical poet—

*Immensos alii tractus, et vasta requirant
Prædia, centenis quæ vix subigantur aratris:
Cui placet utilitas et amæni gratia ruris,
Quo potiatur, emat, non unde gravetur*.*

As we proceeded on our ride from Elwan's Foot, the hills grew higher, and began gradually to assume a more mountainous aspect; but without presenting to the eye any thing picturesque, or even agreeable. But as an uncouth exterior is often compensated by

* Vanierii Præd. Rust. Lib. I.

something valuable beneath it, so it is here. We were in the region of the lead-hills; inhabited by about fifteen hundred persons of different ages, maintained by the labour of those among them, who dig and smelt the ore. We are told, by an intelligent writer*, that "the space, which yields the ore, is little more than a mile square, and is a flat, or pass, among the mountains: The veins of lead run north and south, vary, as in other places, and run from two to four feet thick: some have been found filled with ore, within two fathoms of its surface, others sink to the depth of ninety fathom. A hundred pounds of ore, yield, in general, about seventy pounds of lead." An object of this importance and curiosity, would not have missed our particular inspection; for both the scene and its operations would not have failed to amuse us; but it being Sunday, we took for granted, that if any human beings were glad to avail themselves of the requiem of the sabbath, these poor miners, of all others, must be most disposed to do it. One circumstance, which I

* See Pennant's Tour, Vol. II. p. 129.

learned

learned respecting them, will, perhaps, surprise you. To compensate for their exclusion from society, they have contrived to share in one of its first advantages, the acquisition and communication of knowledge, through the medium of a circulating library, established in the bosom of these hills, at their village, near the mine. Notwithstanding a situation, which should seem to promise as little intellectual, as solar light, many of the miners are said to be intelligent and well-informed.

LEAVING the lead-mines on our right, we kept on our way; and though, for some miles, we met with nothing but nakedness and sterility above ground, it was not long, before our imaginations at least, by a quick transition from the basest to the most precious of metals, were regaled by accounts of gold dust, or native ore, having formerly been found in these districts; washed down by inundations from the hills, and settled, at last, with the gravel, beneath the beds of peat. In the reign of James IV. people were employed to search for it, and, we are assured, they

they sometimes discovered it in sufficient abundance to reward the pursuit. Dr. Mackenzie, in his life of Hector Boeis (Boethius) tells us, "that James IV. having got experienced workmen, well skilled in mines, they had so good success, that, when James V. went over to France, at a sumptuous entertainment, after his marriage, for a desert, instead of sweetmeats, he presented many plates, filled with gold, coined in Scotland, and digged out of the mines in this moor*, which were distributed among the company." The garden of the Hesperides could not have produced a richer present, though, in point of propriety, its golden apples had been more in the stile of a desert. In succeeding reigns, certain German adventurers were, on stipulated conditions, allowed to explore these parts in quest of gold. The work continued for several successive summers, and so much of this precious metal is said to have been procured by them, as was valued at 100,000*l*. But, as some hundred men were engaged in the task, great expence was incurred, and

* Crawford Moor, commonly called Crawford John.

we did not learn, that any scheme of gold-finding had been undertaken in later times than those of James VI. As the persons employed in this project were chiefly foreigners, the good sense of the Scottish nation had probably soon been convinced, that gold might be bought too dear.

AFTER passing many a dreary mile on the Glasgow road, from Moffatt, meeting now and then with a tree, sometimes a house, here and there a field of oats, or barley, black boggy heaths of wide extent, and mosses productive only of peat, or turf, the scene sometimes, however, enlivened by a flock of sheep, on the hills above us, we came, after a long morning, to Douglas Mill; a spacious inn, of good accommodation. A few cottages, on the banks of a stream, just beyond it, were part of a scattered hamlet, in its neighbourhood. Here we dined, and spent the remainder of the day. The serious air of the villagers, in their Sunday attire, passing our window, on their way to the kirk, with their bibles under their arms, which all here
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are able to read, and few ever mention, but with reverence, was no unpleasing spectacle, and augured equally in favour of the manners, and the happiness of their order;

"The lowly train in life's sequestered scene."*

LEAVING our inn this morning, (28th) and, pursuing the high road over the bridge, we soon perceived, but at some distance, the towers of Douglas Castle. This mansion is placed on elevated ground, and finely surrounded by ancient woods of oak and ash, and large plantations of fir, &c. of very modern date.

THE heroism, power, and consequence of this family, their seditious contests with the crown of Scotland, and emulation of the royal dignity and independence, are brilliant topics in the ancient annals of this country. You recollect the mighty figure they make in Buchanan's † History of James II. the fatal

* R. Burns's Poems, p. 185. The Cotter's Saturday Night.

† Lib. XI.

catastrophe of the sixth and eighth earls of that family, in their support of the feudal aristocracy, and their ambitious claims, in opposition to that monarch. A living historian * of Scotland, comparing the latter of these two nobles with the former, says: "He was no less powerful, and no less formidable to the crown. By forming a league with the Earl of Crawford, and other Barons, he had united against his sovereign, almost one half of the kingdom. But his credulity led him into the same snare, which had been fatal to the former earl. Relying on the king's promises, who had now attained to the years of manhood, and having obtained a safe-conduct under the great seal, he ventured to meet him in Stirling Castle. James urged him to dissolve that dangerous confederacy, into which he had entered: the earl obstinately refused. "If you will not," said the enraged monarch, "this shall," and stabbed him to the heart. The earl's vassals run to arms with the utmost fury, marched toward Sterling, burnt the town and threatened to besiege the castle. An accommodation ensued."

* Robertson's Hist. Scot. Book I. p. 53.

HAD not that fertile faculty, the association of ideas, come fortunately to my aid on the transient glimpse we caught of Douglas Castle, I should have had nothing to mention till we come to Lesmehagoe, some miles beyond it, but the same uninteresting vacuity, with regard to external objects, of which I complained in yesterday's ride.

BEFORE we had left far behind us this little town, which hangs agreeably over a romantic cliff, the whole country, as far as the eye commands it from the road, begins to assume a much more cultivated appearance. Villages; hamlets, houses of country-gentlemen and farmers, fields inclosed with hedges, scarcely seen before, with promising crops of corn, some even of wheat, coal-mines, and quarries of lime-stone, both abundant in their produce, and no want of wood, all united to exhibit a character of country different from that hitherto described. And this continued all the way to Hamilton; an old town of some extent and apparent consideration; but its glory is the noble mansion of the Duke of Hamilton. His grace's park had accompanied us for near two miles, as

we approached the town. Crossing the bridge which leads into it, we caught on our left, whilst still upon it, a lovely scene of wood and rocks hanging over the river, which takes its course through the park. It was one of the charming features of Chatelherault; a place appendant to the principal domain*. This particular scene was elegantly natural, and recalled to our minds, the "belle nature" of Pouffin's landscapes.

THE duke's palace, as it is called, at Hamilton, is situated low, amidst fine woods of antique oak; a spacious lawn within them opening immediately round the house. The body of this grand structure is about one hundred and twenty-six feet in length, and has two wings projecting on the Chatelherault or principal front, to such an extent, as to cast a gloom on the central building, not at all to its advantage. But the effect of the whole is highly imposing. That which

* Built and laid out in resemblance of a castle in France and its appendages, bearing that name, and which gave one of the titles formerly borne by the Dukes of Hamilton.

chiefly

chiefly excites the stranger's admiration in this edifice, is the great drawing-room or gallery, occupying the whole body of the house on the first floor ; and the magnificent collection of pictures, with which it is furnished. The superlative merit of the picture of Daniel in the lion's den, by Rubens, and of the portrait of the earl of Denbigh, conjectured to be the work of the same painter, never fails to attract notice, nor to make a lasting impression on spectators. Two framed profiles, by Vandyke, and his sketched drawing of a procession of the Knights of the Garter, intended the subject of a grand picture for the banquetting-house, evidently shew the masterly hand, which produced them. Vandyke was to have executed the painting on the design of this sketch ; representing the portraits of all the great personages then possessing the order, for Charles I. and hoped, it is said, to have rendered it his " chef d'œuvres ;" but the troubles of that reign prevented the accomplishment of the work. Apart from the peculiar merit of the painter, the figures would, in all times, have given it a singular interest. The best pieces

in this collection, having been described by former travellers ; and by some with a taste in the mechanical provinces of the art, which seems to constitute connoisseurship, and which I do not profess, I shall only particularize one more :—That of Mary, queen of Scots, in the complete costume of her time, and painted for her about two years before her death. It is said to be a good likeness for the moment, when it was done, and does not want admirers. Mary had, however, then passed her bloom ; and her beauty had felt the impressive hand of affliction. There is majesty in the character ; but the stiffness of the dress has destroyed that graceful ease, which, in this princess, taught majesty to charm. The only picture, I ever met with of Mary, if it really be of her, which answers all the ideas of beauty and loveliness attributed to her person by the most partial of her historians, is a half length portrait, which I saw some years ago, in a kind of state bed-chamber, at the Grande Chartreuse in Dauphiny. The beauty of the face, of the hair, and of every part of the figure, not to mention the dress, were all so
exquisite,

exquisite, that notwithstanding a laboured story of its authenticity, by the respectable co-adjutor, and other fathers, whose mortified visages flashed with momentary animation as they talked of the portrait before us, I have never been thoroughly convinced, that the piece is not ideal. Whether ideal, or not, this, you will say, was an unaccountable place to find it in. There however it was: and Zeuxes himself might have gazed with rapture on such an idea of beauty, nor shall I ever forget the pleasure I felt in contemplating it. But to return from a digression, the subject of which leads all astray, and must therefore make my apology, the generality of the pictures in this ample collection of Hamilton-house, are by distinguished masters, and many of them allowed to be of extraordinary merit.

I cannot conclude this topic without mentioning, that on our survey of the family portraits in the gallery and other rooms, it was impossible not to recollect the many strange catastrophes, which at different periods have befallen the active and illustrious race of the

Hamiltons. A new order of things happily reigns under its noble representatives of the present day.

FROM the central window of the gallery we had an opportunity of viewing, and, it will be supposed, to the best advantage, the castle of Chatelherault, with its towers and pavillions, built of reddish stone, and placed on high ground about a mile distant from our station. The effect of this object is bold and striking ; but it suffers considerably by the continuation of an avenue of trees, carried all the way up from the wings of the house, till it seems nearly to join the two sides of Chatelherault. This management is formal and aukward, inasmuch as the two lines of wood, at the same time that they convey an idea of parallellism, are not, in themselves, quite straight, nor yet freely deviating from right lines. The design of this avenue, extending thus from one edifice to the other, and keeping the sight disagreeably confined through all the intermediate space, suggests a resolution in the contriver, that neither the castle should escape notice from the palace, nor the palace from

from the castle. The liberty of roving, so dear to the eye, is too absolutely forbidden to be reconciled either to good taste, or to natural feeling. But this unpleasant sensation vanishes and is forgotten, as soon as having quitted the palace and its more appropriated environs, you fling yourself into the sylvan recesses, and all the sweetly wild and varied scenery of Chatelherault, on the banks of the Avon. Antiquaries tell us, that the original name of these domains was Cadyow, or Cadzow. They were in 1445, erected into a barony for a descendant of Sir Gilbert de Hamilton, who having ungardedly spoken of the great merits of Robert Bruce at the court of Edward II. of England, was insulted by the king's chamberlain, John Despencer, whom he slew in a duel. Sir Gilbert, fearing the immoderate power of the Spensers, fled to the court of Scotland; where the king received him with kindness, and gave him these lands on the Clyde*.

* Buchanan's account of this affair ends thus :—*in Scotiam ad Robertum profugit. Ab eo benignè acceptus Agris ad Glottam fluvium donatus est.* Lib. viii.. p. 149. Edit. Eding. 1715. Folio.

JAMES, the first lord Hamilton, in 1451, founded the collegiate church. Its endowments received the sanction of the pope's bull at Rome, which this nobleman went thither to obtain.

THE old castle of Hamilton, after the death of the earls of Lenox and Murray, of which certain persons, of the name of Hamilton were accused, surrendered in 1579; and was, by a decree of the king and Council, entirely demolished. The present superb structure rose out of its ruins.



LETTER

LETTER V.

Glasgow, Aug. 28, 1792.

LEAVING Hamilton we proceeded toward Glasgow, through a well cultivated and pleasant country: of its beauty, however, too much has been said by some travellers. At the distance of only two miles from the town, our view of it was interrupted by large plantations of fir. Having, at length, passed them and a multitude of stinking brick-kilns in black succession, for half a mile farther, we afterwards traversed a dirty street, consisting of brick-makers cottages, and crowded, at the moment, by these useful manufacturers. Before we had advanced far beyond this unpromising scene, we were suddenly surprised by a *coup d'œil* of fine lofty houses, wide, and beautifully paved streets, many of them running to a great length till their sides meet in perspective, and others at right angles to these; the whole crowned with turrets and spires of churches, and of public buildings, rising lightly and gracefully into the air. The
 throng

throng and movement of the numerous and busy inhabitants of Glasgow, wonderfully animated the spectacle, as we went forward. At length, making our way through the "*strepitumque ac strata viarum*," we found ourselves under the lofty tower of the Tolbooth; and alighting at the piazza which joins it, supported by handsome columns, we entered the tontine hotel behind them; a house of public accommodation, worthy of this magnificent city. Its name imports, that it was built by subscription, raised on the modern scheme of survivorship: and no small sum must have sufficed to carry this establishment to its present state; although the new stables, and some other of its appendages, are yet incomplete, or remain to be added. Several apartments, consisting of large dining-rooms, bed-chambers, &c. neatly furnished, and fit for the reception of the most distinguished travellers, occupy a considerable portion of a large court; removed backward from the noise of the street. The rest of the house branches out in different directions; and contains an infinity of rooms and offices on the several stories. But all were nearly full, or else

else previously engaged on our arrival, yesterday afternoon ; and we were uncertain, for some hours, whether beds could be found us within the precincts of the hotel. But an unexpected departure, or two, toward the evening, fortunately made room.

WE had time this morning to examine at leisure an important member of our hotel, which had, yesterday evening, excited our curiosity, as we contemplated it from our dining room window opposite. A grand bow, lighted by five lofty fashes, projects into the court of the hotel : all we could then perceive through them, was a space apparently considerable, with a number of figures sitting, standing, or walking about. On entering, we found a room of seventy or eighty feet in length, with corresponding dimensions of height and breadth ; having another vast window on one of its sides, mingling its auxiliary light with those of the bow. This was no other than the great subscription coffee-room ; supported by certain annual contributions of more than six hundred of the principal citizens of Glasgow, and members of the university.

university. Half the newspapers of London, the Gazettes from Ireland, Holland and France, and a number of provincial journals, and chronicles of Scotland and England, besides reviews, magazines, and other periodical publications, are objects of the Subscription. At the daily arrival of the post, a more stirring, lively, and anxious scene can hardly be imagined. But no part of the day passes without some concourse of subscribers, or of strangers at the hotel, whom their liberality permits freely to partake the benefit of the room. At those hours, when the news of the morning may be said to have grown cold; the monthly publications claim attention in their turn; or people meet for the sake of looking up their acquaintance, or of engaging in casual parties of conversation,

As soon as breakfast was over, we hastened to the college, with a letter from one of my friends in London, to Dr. Patrick Wilson, professor of astronomy; to whose polite attentions we were much indebted during our visit to Glasgow; and particularly for his
having

having made us known to the celebrated Dr. Reid, professor Cummins, and other literary characters of merit, attached to, or educated in that learned seminary.

THE college is a venerable building, much in the stile of the more antient ones at Oxford. Its gothic ornaments, toward the street, have an original and imposing effect. The college consists of three courts, and has a large garden, in which is situated its observatory, on a rising station. This college, which forms the university, was founded about the middle of the fifteenth century, under the auspices of James II. but was built and endowed by Turnbull, bishop of Glasgow. Few of the younger students reside within its walls; but come every day during the sessions, from their lodgings in the city, to attend the lectures of the professors; for whose accomodation the private apartments are chiefly destined; as the public are for their lecture rooms, their library, the council chamber, and repository of their philosophical apparatus, and natural history. I have seen no repository of this kind in any university,

fity, either at home or abroad, more abundantly furnished with mathematical, mechanical, and optical instruments, and every sort of machinery, or model, requisite for the illustration of science; nor any so agreeably and conveniently arranged, as this in the college of Glasgow. It is, indeed, a splendid collection; and few, perhaps, have been rendered more successfully subservient to the purposes, for which they were designed. Several of the professors hold distinguished rank in the republic of letters; and, by their enlightened views of science, and ready address in applying it to the business of life, to its civil, commercial, and economical affairs, they have long had the reputation of contributing, not less to the general interests of society, than to those of the literary world in particular. The celebrated Maclaurin, who received his education in this seminary, was one instance, among others, of this happy faculty of adapting the profound theories of science to the service of common life. This he did in constructing, and perfecting various machines for the working of mines, or the improvement of manufactures; for the conveyance

conveyance of water, and the execution of other public works. Nor should we forget his calculations, to establish annuities, in Scotland, for the benefit of widows, on the annual payment of certain sums; by the possessors of ecclesiastical benefices, professorships and other life-incomes.

PROFESSOR Wilson had the goodness to shew us, among many other academical objects, the observatory, which is immediately within his own department. All the more useful, or at least, necessary instruments, as sextants, mural-quadrants, transit-glasses, &c. you will imagine cannot be wanting here; but that which he wished more particularly to give us inspection of, was a noble telescope of Dr. Herschel's construction, of ten feet in length, and of as many inches in diameter. He obligingly explained some of its principal points of superiority above those invented by former astronomers, sufficiently to impress a very high idea of its merit. As a plate of the telescope, and also many technical terms, would be necessary to convey his observations, I must not attempt to be more particular.

particular.—The stand, on which it was placed, invented likewise by Dr. Herschel, displayed much ingenuity; being so contrived as to move, or to fix the instrument, in any direction required, by the easiest and simplest means. Dr. H. as I understood the professor, constructs his telescopes of these particular dimensions, including the external machinery, for two hundred pounds. That, which he has been some years making for his majesty, is to be forty feet in length, and will be calculated to collect a much greater quantity of light than any former instrument of the kind; and this, indeed, is supposed to be one of the chief objects and advantages proposed in its extraordinary dimensions.

MR. Professor Cummins favoured us with a sight of the monumental stones taken chiefly from the famous wall, extending, according to Camden, from the Forth to Dumbarton; which formed the limit of the Roman conquests in Britain, in the reign of Antoninus Pius. They were found, a great part of them, not many years ago, by the workmen employed in the grand junction of the
Forth

Forth and the Clyde. They are carefully preserved in cases, in a place set apart for them within the precincts of the college. As a small book of engravings has been made from them, in which the figure of each is represented with its inscription, you will dispense with a minuter account. It is enough for me to have pointed out by what means curiosity may be gratified, respecting these curious and valuable reliques of antiquity. Now I am speaking of works of art, I cannot help mentioning a medallion of Dr. Reid, which was shewn us by Dr. Wilson, immediately after he had introduced us to that eminent metaphysician.. It is well executed in the style of the Roman profiles upon ancient medals, and will hereafter be fondly regarded by his many friends and disciples as a memorial of the venerable professor, when that and his works alone shall remain to tell, how he looked, or what he thought. The celebrated original has now seen upward of fourscore years, and still retains a respectable command of all his faculties; his sense of hearing excepted. His metaphysical character and opinions are well known from his

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works,

works; particularly his disagreement with Locke, on the subject of innate ideas*, and his substitution of certain instinctive principles or faculties, through which he would derive them, in order the better to combat the scepticism of Hume, and the ideal system of Berkley. That he was formerly professor of mathematics in one of the Scottish universities, and a most distinguished adept in that science is less known of him in England. That his character as a man is very amiable, I infer from never hearing him spoken of, but with affection and esteem.

FROM the college we went to visit the cathedral, said to be the only gothic church remaining entire in North Britain. It is a building of great magnitude, situate on an elevated scite to the north of the old town. Its length strikes the eye more than its other dimensions. It has a fine spire, which, hav-

* The reader will recollect Dr. Priestley's acrimonious attack upon the Scottish metaphysician in defending this doctrine of Locke, which indeed, English philosophers have long been accustomed to consider, as the corner-stone of all just and rational knowledge of ourselves.

ing been rent by lightning, is in some parts held together by cramps of copper. The bold and lofty arches of the interior edifice, formed by the concurrent ramifications of opposite columns, would exhibit a perspective of the most magnificent effect, were it not almost destroyed by a partition, which divides the old church into two. The seats and galleries in each help also to conceal, or deform the original design. To carry this parsimony of space, as far as it would go, and that, whatever sacrifices be offered in this temple, there may be none to the pride of the eye, its ancient vaults have been converted into a third church; the windows of which, being necessarily near the ground, admit, according to the poet's expression, with doubtless propriety applicable here,

“ Naught save a dim religious light.”

The crowd of pews below, and galleries hanging from the sepulchral arches above, considerably aid the native gloom of the place. Into this lower region it is, that the young clergy of Glasgow often modestly de-

scend to make, not the first display, but the first trial of their talents. The young divine needs certainly be under no apprehension of facing a congregation, whom he cannot see, and who cannot see him. In a place peculiarly destined for the communication of light one can hardly wonder at the observation of a wag, who said, "It was rather odd, to find both parties here so much in the dark." How far it may be needful so tenderly to consult the diffidence of novices, where the clergy, though well trained for the functions of the ministry, are expected to preach without notes, they are best able to judge, who have adopted this arrangement ; but I confess, that in descending into this subterraneous church, so peculiarly calculated to give effect to a funeral harrangue, I could not but imagine, till otherwise informed, that it was probably destined solely to this mournful use. My respectable friends at Glasgow, or any other of its worthy citizens, who may happen to read this letter, will candidly account for the impression made upon a stranger, by the present economical humiliation of this once magnificent edifice consecrated

to the worship of God, when they recollect the admiration universally excited in travellers by the beautiful and expensive architecture of their new city in subservience to the purposes of men.

THE citizens of Glasgow still continue to bury their dead in the cœmeteries, which surround their churches; an inconvenient and pernicious custom in populous places, and which one could hardly have expected still to prevail, in a town of such well regulated police, as Glasgow.

WE saw workmen very busy in pulling down a grand ruin near the cathedral; the remains of the episcopal palace. But this will occasion you no surprize; as every body knows how little partiality the inhabitants of North Britain entertain for the episcopal order, and all its appendages. The demolition of this antient building, happens, however, to have originated in the present case, not in any bigotted prejudice against objects of this nature; but solely in the intention of the magistrates to render the materials ser-

viceable in the erection of their new hospital; the plan of which is very comprehensive, and meant to unite all the conveniencies in point of construction, and advantages, with regard to the accommodation and treatment of patients, which the most approved hospitals hitherto founded, have been known to possess.

THE old town lies on the declivity of a hill, chiefly beneath the cathedral. Its uncouth and antique appearance give the same advantage of contrast to the new one, which a beautiful young woman receives from standing next her great grandmother. The old gentlewoman, in the present comparison, seems worn and shrivelled with age, and probably occupies less space than in the days of her youth; whilst the blooming beauty of this last generation, with her hoop, her train, her airs, and ornaments *à la mode*, like a birth-day figure at court, is swollen out to the most important dimensions, and would as we say, make three of her aged relative on the hill.

THE

THE commencement of the new town is to be dated soon after the union of the two kingdoms. It has kept gradually descending from the old one to the river; the source of its being, its commerce and its prosperity. Having at length reached the Clyde, it has continued spreading eastward along its banks to a breadth of three quarters of a mile on the right; and now taking in the village of Anderston, extends upwards of two miles in length from its antient western boundary, where we first entered it. Every part of this large space is not equally covered with houses at present; but probably will be in a few years. For the rage of building, which perhaps out-runs the increase of inhabitants, now computed at 60,000, is greater if possible than in London.

*Instant ardentēs Tyrīi; pars ducere muros,
 —————et manibus subvolvere saxa,
 Pars optare locum tecto——
 Fundamenta locant alii, immanesq: columnas
 Rupibus excidunt*.*

* Virg. I. 423.

Whether Carthage were altogether a finer town than Glasgow, may bear some dispute; and as good a one too, as antiquaries are often engaged in. If you contemplate the former, as reared by the magic of poetical description, with its harbour, citadel, theatres, temple of Juno, Dido's palace, &c. it must be confessed to have a more magnificent air. But I don't believe, that, in fact, it was built with more intelligence, or that utility and elegance were more happily united by the Tyrian ædiles than by the magistrates of Glasgow. With regard to the fervor of the workmen at Carthage, as described by the poet himself, it did not exceed what I saw of the bricklayers, masons, and carpenters, only profaically busy on the growing streets and squares of Glasgow.

THERE are, if I mistake not, eleven churches, including the cathedral and its subdivisions. The church of St. Andrew, the tutelary saint of Scotland, is a structure, which does not discredit this city. Its Corinthian portico, ornamented urns, &c. are striking embellishments. The interior neatly
stuccoed

stuccoed, and supported by elegant columns is not unworthy of the rest. But the steeple is ill-designed, and the edifice would loose no beauty by its removal. The episcopalian, or English chapel, is said to be very neat. The seceders, independents, and moravians have each their chapel, and the Highlanders a church for service in their own language. No town possesses, I believe, more truly than Glasgow, the spirit of religious toleration. So long as popery excites no jealousy or alarm, all is well; no other sect or persuasion will meet disturbance here. Whether suspicion has been entertained, that the spirit of toleration at Glasgow had, in some individuals, approached a little too nearly to a philosophical indifference for all religion, I cannot tell; but I could not help being struck on seeing a large printed bill stuck up in various parts of the city, the *jeu d'esprit* of some concealed wit, importing, that a superb mosque, with baths, &c. was about to be founded at Glasgow, and that a learned muselman, with a long Arabic name, was coming to establish himself there for the purpose of making, or advancing profelytes,

and

and inculcating the doctrines of the alcoran. However a few short-sighted individuals may possibly affect that overwhelming and destructive philosophy, (what a Proteus is philosophy!) so busily occupied for these last thirty or forty years, in removing all moral and religious restraint from the conduct of man, and making sure way for that barbarism of our species, which, in one great nation, has blotted out the fairest characters of humanity, I am persuaded these persons bear no proportion to that numerous and enlightened part of the inhabitants of Glasgow, who know, from every hour's experience, that human laws can never maintain their power over society without the auxiliary sanction of religion. Suppose but the magistrates of any civilized country under the sun, to become sufficiently insane, to emancipate the people from these ideas, and he will immediately behold the dissolution of society, the overthrow of property, peace and order in his community. Can one reflect with patience on that malignant rabble of atheistical buffons, political mountebanks, ambitious and hypocritical

hypocritical damagogues, who, led on by Voltaire and his crew of encyclopedists, so long have dared to insult the name of philosophy, by giving that dignified title to their crude imagination and puerile jargon; the worst corruption and disgrace of the human intellect? It was but just, that these theories of the libertine philosophy should be first brought to the touch-stone of experiment in that country, which gave them birth. The French have boldly applied them to the actual government of twenty-five millions of men: the universe has seen the result. But the mania of their philosophy has been outrageous, and has broken out in malignant symptoms upon individuals of other nations; and a small party, it is possible, may have been seized in North Britain, as well as more southward; but I am persuaded, that the natural soundness of a Scottish intellect exposes the natives of this country less to infection than many other people, and that, whatever may be the insinuation of the unthinking droll above-mentioned, with regard to Glasgow, an indifference to those awful restraints, which

which alone have hitherto kept order among mankind, is no characteristic of its inhabitants.

With regard to the great body of the people of Glasgow, including the generality of the better ranks, I was informed, on very respectable authority, that their attachment to the stated duties of the sabbath is still warm, their attention to the awful doctrines of religion serious and devout, and to its ministers highly respected; and I believe I may add, upon good information, that the conduct and manners of the Scottish people in general, wherever deviating from regularity, announce much more the natural prevalence of passion, and the progressive effects of national prosperity, than any common perversion of religious principle. Before I quit this subject, I cannot omit to mention that the celebration of the eucharist is very generally attended at all the churches in Glasgow, twice a year, according to the custom throughout Scotland. It is, each time, preceded by two fast-days strictly observed,
and

and although the kirk understand nothing farther in this sacrament, than a grateful and solemn memorial of our Saviour's death and passion, it is always observed with exemplary devotion.

AFTER having with much pleasure contemplated the various and abundant proofs of the flourishing state of the city, in the beauty, splendor and convenience of its streets, and its public and private buildings, I was anxious to take a view of the Clyde, the grand and original source of its prosperity. This river, which rises on the south side of the town, in Annandale, and taking a long north-westerly course through Clydesdale, and passing by Glasgow, Hamilton and Glasgow, falls into the Firth of Clyde between Greenock and the Isle of Bute, and thence meeting the sea in the north channel of Ireland, communicates with the German Ocean and the Atlantic. The stream at Glasgow is of considerable breadth, its channel indeed being too wide for the navigation, too was formerly much navigated by a number of boats. The water

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Glasgow, August 30th, 1794.

AFTER having with much pleasure contemplated the various and abundant proofs of the flourishing state of this city, in the beauty, splendor and convenience of its streets, and its public and private buildings, I was anxious to take a view of the Clyde; the grand and original source of its prosperity. This river, which runs on the south side of the town, rises in Annandale, and taking a long north-westerly course through Clydesdale, and passing by Lanerk, Hamilton and Glasgow, falls into the Firth of Clyde between Greenock and the Isle of Bute, and thence meeting the sea in the north channel of Ireland, communicates with the German Ocean and the Atlantic. The stream at Glasgow is of considerable breadth; its channel indeed being too wide for the quantity of water flowing through it. Its navigation too was formerly much incommoded by a number of shoals. The accessory

fory waters, brought up even by the spring tides, do not add above three feet, nor those by the neap-tides above one, to the periodical depths of the stream. Great inconveniences were experienced from this shallowness of the river; and lighters in seasons of drought, were, many weeks together, detained at a distance from the quays of Glasgow. An able engineer some years ago undertook to deepen the channel at Broomy-law quay; so as to command seven feet of water, even at the neap-tides. The removal of some of the shoals was another object of this important undertaking; and vessels of seventy tons can, at present, approach the town.

Two bridges, an ancient one of eight arches, and a modern one of seven, cross the Clyde, and open a communication between the city, the county of Renfrew, and all the coast on the left shore of the Firth. The new bridge appears from its scite to have been a project of anticipation with regard to its use, or necessity; as we can hardly suppose, its main object at the time of building it,

it, to have been the convenience of the village of Anderton. This bridge is the work of Milne. It has, between each of its seven arches, but somewhat higher, a circular aperture to carry off an extraordinary rise of the waters in great floods. Instead of balustrades on its two sides are parapet walls, pierced with an open work in small squares, not unlike the pigeon holes of a dove-coat. This fancy is meant to give an appearance of lightness to the upper part of the bridge, and the idea seems at least original. At a distance the effect is perhaps not bad; but it suggests, at all points of view, rather an idea of caprice than of beauty. We were not surprised to have seen no imitation of it elsewhere. Under the circumstances, which have been mentioned, nineteen thousand pounds expended on the construction of this bridge, was surely a very considerable sum for the considerate inhabitants of Glasgow. This bridge and Jamaica Street, though the latter did not exist at the building of the former, lend to each other an effect of perspective mutually advantageous.

IN our walk from this bridge westward, betwixt the river and the town, we passed the great glass-works, the ropery, and others of those vast and numerous establishments of manufactures, which, by means of the Clyde, make their way into every part of the world, and are returned to the citizens of Glasgow in all the various forms of wealth. At no great distance from the water are situated their tanneries, their saddleries, and every sort of leather manufacture. These furnish great exports to America and the West Indies. Their sugar refineries, their potteries, which rival those of Staffordshire, their stone and iron manufactures, not to mention their woollen looms, their fabrics of cotton, linen, lawn, and cambric, are distributed in various quarters of the lower town. The letter foundery, for printing types, deserves particular notice; a species of manufacture at Glasgow, allowed to be executed with superior neatness and intelligence.

THE active inhabitants of Glasgow partake also in the fisheries of North Britain; but their concern in this branch is chiefly carried

on at Port Glasgow, about twenty miles distant, at the head of the Firth of Clyde.

THE first benefit, which this town derived from the union, was the large share it took, with England, in the Virginia tobacco trade. Since the American revolution, this article of commerce and manufacture has greatly declined throughout the whole kingdom; but I was informed, that, in the year 1772, out of ninety thousand hogsheads of tobacco, imported from Virginia to Great Britain, the town of Glasgow alone, engrossed forty nine thousand. The vigorous spirit of trade, and manual craft, engaged in importing, and working up so abundant a quantity of that article, has since been successfully turned to new objects of commerce; so that there is reason to believe, that, were an accidental failure to happen in any other branch, in the ordinary system of business at Glasgow, the ingenuity and industry of the inhabitants would soon supply the chasm.

PASSING now by the old bridge, and still keeping the Clyde on our right, we proceeded

ceeded to some extensive open meadow grounds, known by the following names, the Low, the High, and Gallowgate, Greens. They all communicate, and are bounded, from the north-west to the south-west, by continued avenues of lofty trees, with agreeable walks beneath them. As we were making our way to their attractive shades, after the warm walk which we had been taking, our curiosity was excited by a novel kind of scene upon Low Green: for which you must allow me to invent the appellation of the "Washery" of the whole city of Glasgow. The respectable companion of our walk, with some hesitation, led us to the door of a large reeking edifice; from the threshold of which, we beheld some hundreds of females, within the inclosure, all in the busy acts of rubbing, scrubbing, scouring, dipping, and wringing all sorts of linen clothes, accompanied by a loudness, volubility, and confusion of tongues, which scorned to wait each other's motions, for the trifling convenience of being understood; and such as naturally recalled the polyglot of Babel.

Amant alterna camænæ:

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But these were no dabblers in Helicon. We ventured not a step beyond the entrance of this dome of general purification; and thought ourselves well off, to have made our retreat, precipitate as it was, without having been the objects of any of that delicate wit and raillery, which distinguish the place; and from which, we were told, few strangers so fortunately escape.

These ladies, from their continual habits of bodily activity, and unrestrained exercise of the understanding, in their common conversations, acquire a vigour of body, and freedom of spirit, which sometimes render their union formidable. An instance occurred, not long ago, of their differing in opinion, from the magistrate, in the distribution of justice; and of their successfully undertaking, in a body, to deliver, from the hands of the beadle, a culprit, whom they were conducting, according to his sentence, to be publicly whipped.

We at length reached the walks to which we had been tending, and were rather surprised

prized to find ourselves, on a very warm day in August, the only party, two ladies excepted, who had resorted from the hot-press of this populous town, to enjoy the luxury of a refreshing shade. This circumstance gave occasion to some discourse on the little propensity to pleasure, or amusement, which the inhabitants of this opulent city have hitherto manifested; and my mind was from thence, as you will see by and by, led forward through a rapid train of reflections, on the progress, perfection, and decay of all civil communities.

THESE walks, I learnt, are at no time much frequented; although little seems wanted but company, and the removal of linen, exposed to dry, which conceals the verdure, to make them very pleasant. Wild scenes of wood, remote from human abodes, affect the imagination most agreeably from their natural state of undisturbed solitude: but to see public avenues, long, spacious, and handsomely planted, like these, in the vicinage of a fine town, meant purposely to assemble the rich, the young and gay, thus neglected and forlorn,

lorn, excited a sensation of disappointment, to which a stranger does not immediately reconcile himself. But the citizens of Glasgow, as I was going to tell you, shew little disposition, at present, to many of those social indulgencies, to which most populous towns, whether rich or poor, are generally but too much inclined. They can scarcely keep open their play-house during the course of one month in a year; and their dancing assemblies are on foot only in the winter season.

THE better ranks of women appear little in the streets; indeed scarcely any where less, being laudably engaged at home in the education of their children and the economy of their families; whilst their husbands are employed in their fabrics and counting-houses on the means of establishing the next generation solidly, or at ease in the world. They, whose greater affluence enables them to substitute deputies in the more laborious provinces of their vocation, are properly occupied in the higher offices of the magistracy, the police of the town, or the chambers of commerce

commerce and manufactures. One would almost conceive Glasgow to be unacquainted even with the name of idleness. The dreaming oscitancy of a set of beings, continually in quest of something to do, because they can never resolve to be actually doing, so common in most towns among those at their ease, is unknown here. Every man, and every woman have each their objects of pursuit; and they must, at least, be negatively happy, who have not leisure to be miserable. A dish of tea; a party of conversation; a quiet game at cards, without the poignancy of high play, are the ordinary amusements of an afternoon's visit at Glasgow. The men are not averse to prolonging conversation after dinner over a bowl of small punch; the favourite beverage of their more social hours. But the pleasure, most regularly indulged, is their daily call at the tontine coffee-room. Here every man meets his friends, or his acquaintance; here he learns whatever is new or interesting at home or abroad, in politics, commerce; and often in literature. His mind recovers, or acquires here tone and elasticity; and each returns to his family or his business with

new ideas to apply, to exercise, or contemplate, according to his pursuits, or his humour. Here then is centered the principal amusement of the place, whilst the only luxury indulged at Glasgow, is the passion for elegant building. Will this city ever be better, or more innocently amused, or indulge in a luxury at once more splendid, and creditable? The manners of society, however, can never long be stationary at their most rational point. The succeeding generation will find many idle means of spending, what the prudence, and industry of the present, have been treasuring up. And as every thing wrong, has commonly a defender in him, who practices it, the good sense of the present day, will yield in time to a kind of sophistry, which will ingeniously represent the worse state as the better. Hence the progressive corruption of moral principles, and the beginning of declension in social happiness. A remoter race will be refined into something worse. As mechanical improvements will multiply the useless and imaginary conveniences of life, religious habits will loose ground; whilst the former strengthen man's confidence

confidence in himself, they weaken his dependence on the providence of God. Riches will increase with the extension of commerce: vanity, vice, and idle luxuries will make proportionable progress. Morality and religion will become too austere for good company: external decency, however, will, for some time, preserve their semblance, till a yet remoter posterity, under the pretence of farther amelioration, will see no necessity for even the appearance of any principles, religious or moral. This will be called a state of the most perfect liberty; the most refined philosophy. The multitude will soon understand in it a right to govern themselves according to their will and caprice, like the philosophers above them. Preachers will arise from among the lowest order, who will bring the fashionable philosophy down to the level of their ideas. Nothing is sooner learnt, than that every man may do as he pleases. Grown, in their own fancies, now as wise as those, whom they lately thought wiser, and who once, indeed, possessed the most real superiority, they will soon proceed to take the management of their country into their

their own hands, as being the strongest party; will insist next on the equality of all conditions; overthrow all orders and distinctions; destroy property; dissolve all the ties of society; murder and massacre each other; become barbarians and savages; and living in this state, till the misery and horror of it becomes quite intolerable, they will, at length, humbly listen to the voice of reason, which in a few individuals will have remained safe and entire amidst the wreck of every social good; they will be taught to see the necessity of personal security, peace and order, to maintain but the lowest degree of human happiness, and will discover, at length, that these can only be procured by religion, morals, public law, a delegated force, and the representative wisdom of communities, brought into the narrow compass of assemblies and councils, under the rule of one, or of few, to simplify the execution of the common force and wisdom; nor is it probable that mankind will ever discover any thing better or wiser; perhaps I might say, any other possible means to give strength, consistence, and duration to governments, than the old institutions, religious

gious and moral, privileged orders in society, distinctions of merit, rank and office, inequalities of rich and poor, which have more or less subsisted, hitherto, in every government in the world,

CITIES, states, and kingdoms, have their infancy, their childhood, their youth, their maturity, their old age, their decrepitude, their death, like the individuals of mankind; but communities have the advantage of springing again, like the phoenix, from their own ashes. The civil death of a neighbouring kingdom, the destruction, which we have seen of all the best principles of society, will, under providence, produce a renewed order of things: the grand leading principles of social and civil happiness will all return, under some variation, perhaps some new modification of the ancient forms, and a renovation of its former glory and splendor will slowly rise into existence; although, after the lapse, we will hope, of many succeeding generations, many future ages, but to fall again by the natural progress and vicissitude of human things, into corruption, decay, and ruin. In this rotation
revolves

revolves the fate of all the kingdoms, empires, and states of the universe. The principal difference betwixt them, is in the slower, or more-rapid, the more or less uniform motion of the wheel, which seldom ceases, however, absolutely to move on, and the motion of which is, perhaps, never retrograde.

WE now quitted the public walks, in which nothing had occurred to interrupt our conversation on the state of society and manners in Glasgow; from whence you, perhaps, will allow the preceeding reflections not unnaturally to have sprung; and shortly we re-entered the town.

THE miscellaneous nature of a traveller's letter is continually making violent transitions necessary from one subject to another, of a species totally different. Wonder not then, if from moral reflections, I lead you to the scene of a market. This sort of object in cities, regulated like Glasgow, by a good police, may be often found worthy of a stranger's inspection. As the markets, at Glasgow, may be reckoned among the ornaments of the place, some
account

account of one of them, more peculiarly destined for the convenience of the new town, may, perhaps, amuse you. We were rather surprized to see a circular building, in form of a theatre, with a handsome glazed rotunda to enlighten it, and beneath that, elegant galleries of mahogany, supported by columns, running round the whole; and all this to afford covering for the shambles of butchers, which occupy the area below, and shops of green-grocers, made in certain recesses, communicating with the galleries. Water, I understood, is ingeniously conveyed through the columns, in order to wash the meat-stalls, &c. and to keep the the whole place clear of offensive odours. The portals of entrance, into some of these theatrical markets, are handsomely sculptured, and embellished with architectural ornaments.

I anticipate your ideas of incongruity between the elegance of these scenes, and the uses to which they are applied.

A humorist of the herd of Epicurus entertained different notions of this matter, who said,

said, that as the business of butchers and green-grocers is peculiarly adapted to the gratification of taste, he could not see, why so much of the intellectual kind of it, displayed on the repository of their articles, were out of place. As critics had not disdained to borrow the name of that discerning sense in arts and morals from those, whose vocations were wholly concerned with sensual taste and appetite, it was fairly to be supposed, that there existed a natural alliance betwixt eating and the fine arts, and that to insist upon a total separation argued nothing but squeamishness and affectation.

WHATEVER ingenuity you may allow to this way of viewing the subject, the case, I understand, was partly thus: that some novel attraction was found requisite, to induce the butchers and green-grocers to relinquish their ancient custom of keeping market in the open streets. And, in fact, all the elegance and convenience of their new market-houses, proved at first, scarcely powerful enough to overcome the inveterate prejudices of habit. But another reason, founded in the good sense

sense of the magistrates, principally operated in the refinement I am speaking of. This was to contrive an agreeable inducement for the good housewives of better ranks, to continue their æconomical and laudable practice of purchasing, themselves, the provisions of their household.

THIS town, among its other public structures, possesses a spacious granary, and two hospitals; one called the merchants, and the other Hutchinson's; charitable establishments, of peculiar benefit, in this populous resort of manufactures and commerce. The exchange, the guard-house, and the toll-booth, the latter containing the city prison, and tribunal of justice, merited more particular notice than our time allowed us to give them. An inscription, on the front of the toll-booth, conveys its several uses and designs, closely compressed in the following distich:

Hæc domus odit, amat, punit, conservat, honorat,

Nequitiam, pacem, crimina, jura, probos.

AFTER

After some pause of rest, we ascended the high ground, on the north side of the town, for the gratification of inspecting the aqueduct-bridge; a newly finished, and important work. By means of this bridge, and its appendant locks and basons, Glasgow enjoys a communication with the celebrated canal, which joins the Forth and the Clyde. This work forms a new cut, or canal, of some miles in length, reaching from the great original one, and on similar dimensions of width and depth, till it terminates in a fine new bason near the city, called Port Dundas. This magnificent aqueduct carries the water over two lofty rocks; the rocks themselves serving for the abutments of the two extreme piers. The length of the bridge, or aqueduct, is 250 feet; it is 70 feet high; its channel 8 feet deep, and 54 broad; constructed upon four cylindrical arches, each 50 feet in span. You will have some idea of the magnitude of the undertaking, from the time and labour found necessary for its accomplishment. On an average, 500 men were employed on each half mile, for the space of three years. Vessels of 96 tons,
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and upwards, conveniently pass this noble canal; and we had the satisfaction of seeing one of considerable burthen, navigated into port, soon after our arrival at it.

Glasgow has also the benefit of another canal, running about ten miles eastward, to the village of Airdrie. This navigation is of the utmost consequence to this place; as it conveys from the coal mines, at which it terminates, the enormous quantity of that article, equally requisite for domestic use, and for the consumption of the fabrics of the city.

A moment's retrospect on the united advantages resulting from such a command of navigable water, and on the ability and industry of the inhabitants, in turning them to the best account, explains, without difficulty, the flourishing and opulent condition of the city of Glasgow.

As we were descending from Hamilton Hill, on our return from the aqueduct-bridge, with the prospect of the town spread out before us, a train of pleasing reflections

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passed in my mind, on that sum of social happiness and prosperity in its actual possession. Feeling warmly desirous, that the preservation and security of so much good should be protracted to the longest term, which the fluctuating state of human affairs may admit, there was no subject, on which, before our departure, I more anxiously wished some information, than the government and police of Glasgow; for, on the influence of these, co-operating with a zealous and regular inculcation of religious and moral principles from the pulpit, and in the schools of education, depend the duration of welfare, and the flourishing state of any city, or community. As, however, my letter is swelling to greater extent than I designed, I will give you, as briefly as I can, only an outline-sketch of the municipal system of Glasgow; without entering into a detail of the several officers; whose distinct powers, it would take much time precisely to define; and even whose titles would be scarcely intelligible without researches into antiquity, more proper for a dissertation, than a traveller's letter.

The corporation, comprizing the civil magistracy of Glasgow, and whose more immediate office, is the administration of justice, through the medium of the public laws, and of their own particular rules of police, consists of a provost, certain assessors, and twenty-five council-men. Their jurisdiction is of nearly the same nature and extent with that of the great corporate towns of South Britain. But there are differences respecting the continuance of the principal officers in their functions, and their manner of election, which you would not think sufficiently interesting, to demand particular notice. The lords of session make their regular circuits, for the trial of capital offences, and all civil causes of greater magnitude; and consequently, supersede the municipal jurisdiction of the corporate body, in all such matters, as the judges of assize do with us.

A second corporate body, called the merchants-house, is composed of forty members; elected yearly, out of that order of citizens. Their president, the Dean of Guild, with eight assessors, as his council, form a weekly

court; who take cognizance of all disputes relating to commerce, and before whom the litigating parties plead their own cause, without the assistance of lawyers. An appeal lies from this court, to that of the great council of the magistracy, first mentioned. The Dean of Guild admits burgeses to the freedom of the city, imposes fines, exacts forfeitures; and can, with the consent of his council, tax the community of Guild-brethren, to a certain sum, for the assistance, or support of distressed persons, connected with their own order. The scrutiny of weights and measures, and the punishment of defaulters in these articles, fall under the jurisdiction of this officer. And his competence, likewise, extends to the determination of boundaries; the prevention, or removal, of all encroachments, or nuisances in building; to the taking down of old houses, which appear in a ruinous condition; and even, it is said, to the disposal, by auction, of the ground on which they stood; if their proprietors, within three years, shall neither have rebuilt them, nor have removed the old materials.

THE last of the municipal bodies, which share the government and police of the city, is the trades-house, consisting of fifty-six delegates from the incorporated trades of Glasgow. A deacon convener presides over this court: whose province is to adjust and terminate disputes, arising among the different orders of tradesmen and mechanics, whom they represent; and to collect and distribute particularly those funds, which are raised, in certain proportions, by the more opulent, for the maintenance of their poor; not to mention several other matters of inferior concern.

UNDER the firm and upright administration of these three bodies, among whom, are many able and enlightened persons, the peace and order of the public are said to be as well preserved, as can possibly be expected in so populous a city.

L E T T E R VII.

Greenock, August 31, 1791.

YESTERDAY we took leave of Glasgow and, passing through a pleasant and rich country, varied with woods and corn fields, gentlemen's houses, and the villas of opulent merchants and manufacturers of Glasgow, we came, after a ride of eight miles to Paisley. This town is very large, and some of its streets are well-built, and handsome houses scattered about in many others. Its inhabitants are computed at about twenty thousand; all busily employed, like those of Glasgow, in various manufactures, and a flourishing commerce. But as Paisley has risen into consideration from these circumstances later than Glasgow, it falls, at present, far short of the wealth or elegance of the latter. The same spirit, however, of industry and adventure, the same exertions of ingenuity and good sense prevailing here, it is not improbable,

bable, that, in the course of half a century, it may attain a degree of brilliancy and consequence, much beyond its present pretensions.

As the aspect of this part of the country differs considerably from the general character of North Britain, in order to take a more distinct view of it, it was recommended to us to ascend the tower of the high church; because, when we should have mounted to the battlement, nothing would interrupt the free range of the eye. When we had got up to the height proposed, we should have enjoyed our situation, but for the difficulty of keeping it, on account of the extreme violence of the wind; which made some caution necessary to prevent our being blown over.

AN ample extent of country, much more even, though not absolutely flat, presented itself, than we had yet seen, or are likely to see, in Scotland, from any one point. Our view took in a circuit of nearly twenty miles, with little interruption from any considerable hill. The greater part of it has a rich and cultivated

appearance; with but little of the picturesque. One of its principal features is the white Cart*, the river, on which Paisley is situated, which descending from the north-east angle of the county of Renfrew, empties itself into the Clyde, about three miles below this town. This communication enables the inhabitants to send their manufactures to Port-Glasgow and Greenock on one side; and to hold a commercial intercourse with the city of Glasgow on the other; and by means of the grand canal, joining the Clyde to the Forth, at a little distance, with Edinburgh itself, and the eastern seas.

At half a mile west of Paisley stands the little village of Marwilton; chiefly distinguished, at present, by an extensive fabric of gauzes; and some neat looking houses and cottages dependent upon it. But our guide pointed out, near it, the site of a very antient con-

* So called to distinguish it from the black Cart. These two streams meet opposite to the town of Renfrew, on the road to Port Glasgow; and a handsome bridge, of ten arches, is built over the point of confluence.

vent of monks, founded in 1160; of which few relics can now be traced, though once a monastery of consequence. It appears from an old latin charter of the founder, that his name was Walter, son of Allan; whose office it had been to serve the king of Scotland at table. He called himself "Dapifer regis Scotiæ". As his majesty and his sons had probably taken good care of the venerable Walter's mortal part, he gratefully, as the charter imports, founded his monastery "for the soul of David the late king, and the soul of Henry King of England, and for the soul of count Henry, and for the health of the body and soul of king Malcolm, and for the souls of all his relations and benefactors, and lastly for his own soul*."

THE next object, which we were desired to notice, was Crookstone Castle, about two miles from Paisley. All that remains of its

* David I. who died 1153, and probably Malcolm IV. who succeeded him, must be the Scottish king, here meant. Count Henry was one of the brothers of Malcolm, who died before his father. Henry I. of England, died 1135. For the original latin charter, see Pennant's Tour, Vol. II.

ancient magnificence, at least all, that was discernable in our situation, is one ruined tower. Its scite is on a rising ground ; commanding, in its more immediate environs, a number of little hills, the river, the town of Paisley, its lively neighbourhood, and a considerable reach over the rich and populous vale of the Cart. The view was such as excited warm prejudices in favour of the country, and much regret, that our time would not allow a nearer inspection of it. But that which gave it more peculiar interest, was the recollection of its having been the scene, that first witnessed the ardent passion of the beautiful queen of Scots, and her accomplished Darnley, and all the fatal gallantries of their earliest attachment†.

THAT was the scene of Mary's love ; and, not far from it, our eyes were directed to Langside-hill, equally famed on account of her defeat, which followed her escape from imprisonment, at Loch-leven Castle, only three years afterwards. “ During the en-

† About 1565

gagement

gagement at Langside," says Robertson, "Mary stood on a hill, at no great distance, and beheld all that passed in the field with such emotions of mind, as are not easily described. When she saw the army, which was her last hope, thrown into irrecoverable confusion, her spirit, which all her past misfortunes had not been able entirely to subdue, sunk altogether. In the utmost consternation, she began her flight; and so lively were her impressions of fear, that she never closed her eyes, till she had reached the abbey of Dundrenan; full sixty* Scottish miles from the place of battle†."

Our guide, I think, pointed out, a little westward of Crookstone Castle, the elegant villa of Hawkishead; one of the residences of the Earl of Glasgow; but our blustering situation tempted no farther survey of the environs of Paisley.

* Scottish miles are only fifty to a degree; and, consequently, longer than English ones. See Campbell's map, 1790.

† Robertson's Hist. Scot. Vol. II. p. 458,

As we were descending the steps of the tower, we asked the good man, who attended us, whether we could obtain access to some of the principal manufactures of the place without particular recommendation to the managers. His answer, with a quick Scottish accent, "That he believed they were not so keen to let stragglers in", diverted us a good deal. We continued our walk, however, about the town, and saw the great cotton mill of Cowan and company, worked by a steam engine. A twist-mill, for sewing thread, a very important manufacture, at Paisley; and the various operations of a tape-loom, worked partly by a wheel, and partly by hand, attracted our notice; but without plates, it is not easy, if indeed possible, to convey any distinct ideas of these fabrics. We peeped into a large forge and foundry; apparently connected; where all sorts of iron work, and machinery in that metal, used in the numberless manufactures of this town, are continually making. The bustle, blaze, and ingenuity, displayed in this Cyclopian scene, having, for some time, amused us, we were very well satisfied, at least,

least, respecting the existence of many hundred other mills, looms, forges, and fabrics of different kinds, by the perpetual whizzing, creaking, grinding, hammering, thumping, flapping, scraping, singing, whistling, and scolding; the mingled and multifarious din, accompanying these useful arts; which entered our ears, without leave, as we passed along the streets.—Many of these streets derive their names from those species of manufacture, which originally prevailed in each: Thus we found ourselves, at one turn, in Cotton-street; at another, in Lawn-lane; which, perhaps, led us into Gauze-alley; from whence we made a transition into Inckle-street, or Ribband-court. You will perceive I am rather giving you the characteristic names, than the real order of the streets; a minuteness you will easily dispense with.

MANY of the manufacturers of Paisley, are originally English; at first allured hither, in pursuit of subsistence, or of fortune, by cheapness of provisions, abundance of fuel,
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the ready convenience, both of export and import by water, and other favourable circumstances; which, concurring with just views, and unremitting exertions, have produced that movement, life, and prosperity, which animate every object in the place.

It was impossible to quit Paisley without visiting the famous vocal chapel; the remains of the ancient abbey church. It is, at present, the burying-place of the Earls of Abercorn; and, being no longer used for divine service, all its seats, galleries, &c. are removed; and the whole interior, above the vaults, remains a large, void space. The west door, immediately on our entrance, being shut with some violence, an echo succeeded, like a clap of thunder, which rolled beneath the Gothic roof, with surprising effect. A person singing a few notes of a slow and pleasing strain, which he happened to recollect, the reverberation multiplied every sound, till the whole circumambient space was filled with one great volume of harmonious air, which, dying away by gentle degrees, enchanted every ear. The statue of Memnon,

so celebrated by poets, and grave historians*, could not have caused the Ægyptian temple of Serapis, to resound with more celestial music, at the rising of the sun :

Dimidio magicæ resonant ubi Memnone chordæ†.

Among the antiquities of this chapel, may be ranked, the little old man, upwards of ninety; who constantly attends to shew it to strangers. Upon our entrance, we found him rehearsing, to a group of young gentlemen, near the sepulchral statue of Margery Bruce‡, the story of that princess, who was thrown from her horse, in hunting, near Paisley, and being killed, was interred here. She was pregnant at the time, and far advanced. The child, immediately after the accident, was taken from her alive. This was Robert II. called *Blear eye*, from some hurt which that member had received, in

* Tacitus, Annal. II. Pliny, the elder, xxxvi, 7. Philost. Icon. Lib. I. and others, mention this statue.

† Juvenal Sat. 15.

‡ She was the wife of Walter, Great Steward of Scotland, and daughter of Robert Bruce.

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the operation of his birth. The monument itself, was called that of Queen Bleary, by our plebeian Cicerone; probably its common name in the place. He led us up to the altar, at the east end of the chapel; over which we discovered some mutilated remains of stone-work, in alto-relievo; representing priests, and their attendants, in the ceremonies of the mass, and other offices of the catholic church.

After dinner, we pursued our journey to Greenock. Our road, for some miles, displayed marks of its vicinity to Paisley, in a succession of beautiful villas, and a country abounding with corn, diversified with gentle hills, and frequently covered with patches of wood. After some time, the Clyde broke in upon our view; now become a noble river, and widening its channel at every step of our progress. Although this stream does not flow in varied curves, and rarely breaks into romantic bays and recesses, overhung with wood or rocks, which render the course of many rivers interesting to painters of landscape, it every where forms a splendid and
exhi-

exhilarating object; is every where the boast of commerce, the main organ of social comfort, and elegance of life, to the western and southern regions of Scotland. The Clyde, though not picturesque in itself, soon becomes so in its accessories: Its farther shore presented to our view, the mountains of Dumbarton and Sterlingshire, rising on the eastern side of Loch Lomond, with lively green vallies, opening between them, till the eye, lost in their long perspectives, or unable to pursue their turns among the mountains, experienced in the distant scenery, that sort of effect, which is so highly piquant to the imagination. At length, an abrupt, and insulated rock, with two lofty, conical crags, unequally spiring out of it; the whole seemingly impending over the water, exhibited, between them, the castle of Dumbarton, overlooking the Leven, and the Clyde, from a singular, and bold a situation, as ever occurred to my sight. Travelling upon high ground, on the left shore of the Clyde, opposite to the castle, on the right, then about two miles distant from us, we could discover the town of Dumbarton, nearly behind the vast castle-

rock, placed in security under its protection. The whole scene, with its background of mountains, whose distant summits were hid in the clouds, was, indeed, marked by no ordinary degree of sublimity. Two or three miles farther, we passed the residence of Lord Glencairn; a modern house, with its groves hanging over the Clyde. After crossing a succession of steep hills, we commanded an extensive reach of the river; and, at some considerable distance, a brilliant sunset view of the towns of Port-Glasgow, and Greenock, not far beyond it; with their harbours at the head of the Firth. Both these places were apparently united from some part of our route. When we were descending the last hills, in our approach to Port-Glasgow, at about eighteen miles from Paisley, the sun had been some time gone down; and we could now but faintly distinguish the houses, and the masts of numerous vessels in the harbour, through the dusk of the evening. It was night, when we passed through it; but having been recommended to good accommodations at Greenock, only two miles beyond, we drove patiently on, and arrived time enough

enough to allow me an hour for continuing my journal, before supper. This we partook with some intelligent travellers of the mercantile class, whose conversation amused us till bed time.

September 1.

PORT-Glasgow, though situated more than twenty miles from Glasgow, by the course of the river, was, till 1775, under the municipal jurisdiction of that town; and is still called its port. It was, at the period just mentioned, erected, by act of parliament, into a corporation, under the title of a burgh of barony. The body consists of thirteen officers, styled trustees, superintended by two bailiffs, annually chosen; one, the superior, by the city of Glasgow; and the other, by the trustees, from among themselves. At the first establishment of this port, the merchants, resident at Glasgow, freighted their vessels with its manufactures, for foreign countries; but the distance obliging them to incur an expensive agency, many of them have changed their situation, and now carry on business, personally, at Port-Glasgow; in

which the merchants of Greenock participate largely with them. About one hundred and twenty-five vessels belong to Port-Glasgow; though some of them are the property of merchants, who reside still in the city of Glasgow. Much the greater part of these ships are engaged in foreign commerce: the remainder in the herring fishery, and the coasting trade. Several foreign vessels may be added to the number, which trade constantly to Port-Glasgow. The whale fishery of this place, which commenced but a few years ago, is said to be upon the decline. Its success in the northern seas, has, hitherto, not been considerable; and it has been conjectured, that the company, engaged in this adventure, will entirely relinquish it, and give more into that of the herring fishery, which will admit of great extension; particularly among the western islands. It does not appear, that, during the present century, this fish has ever immediately frequented the Clyde, with constancy, for many seasons together.

GREEN-

GREENOCK* is a much more considerable town than Port-Glasgow. The inhabitants of both, including their mariners, amount to near twenty thousand; of whom, almost four-fifths may be reckoned to Greenock. The harbour is spacious, containing an area, of more than ten acres, within two exterior curved quays: It is divided by a freestone-pier, running between them. This harbour, however, is much crowded with vessels; and a considerable addition is making to it, which, when finished, will render it one of the completest in Great Britain. Greenock, like its neighbour, though more independent, is greatly indebted to the city of Glasgow for its trade.

HERE, are two sugar refineries, a ropework, a sail-cloth manufactory, and some others, not inconsiderable, in the article of leather; both for shoes and saddlery, designed for exportation. The trade to Ireland, the West Indies, America, and the Baltic, besides that carried by the coast, chiefly for the importation of grain, and other provisions,

* Supposed to be derived from the Gallic word *Grianig*, or bay of the sun.

from Liverpool, &c. is in a very flourishing state. The herring fishery, set on foot here, by a company, with particular privileges, in the reign of Charles II. has been one of the principal sources of opulence to this town. Although that company subsists no longer, the bounty of 30s. per ton, allowed by government, on the establishment of a society, in 1750, called "the Free British Fishery," has since much encouraged the fishing of herrings. A thousand persons were employed, last year, on that object; and upwards of forty-five thousand barrels of herrings were entered at their custom-house; and more than eight thousand, at that of Port-Glasgow. It should seem, with little reason, after this account, that some persons, whom we conversed with at Greenock, were inclined to question the good effect of the grants and indulgencies of government to the herring fisheries. The Dutch, they observed, depending wholly on their own industry, are, whilst the season lasts, constant fishers in our northern seas; whereas, it was pretended, that when the Greenockers are engaged in the adventure of herring fishing, they have always willingly

willingly relinquished it, for opportunities of trading. The Dutch have, undoubtedly, their own motives of perseverance, which were not here taken into account; and the more natural conclusion would have been, that the Greenockers, without the bounties granted them, would not have pursued the herring-fishery at all. It may, perhaps, be true, that they are much better disposed to the fishery of cod, on the banks of Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia; as they send thither, several ships every year, and certainly prosecute it with vigour.

UPON taking notice of some iron-guns, fixed perpendicularly, on the quays, for the purpose of staying the cables of ships, I was informed, that they were discovered in the Clyde, by diving; and the tradition is, that they had been lost near the harbour, in a wreck of one of the armed ships in the famous Spanish armada.

THE new church of Greenock, which occupies the upper side of a neat square, a little above the harbour, is a handsome stone edifice, till it reaches the spire. That unfortu-

nate termination will, I fear, to most beholders, suggest no better origin of its model, than the top of a vinegar cruet. The Ionic portico, which forms the vestibule of the church, with the flight of steps ascending to it, from the square, is in a stile not unworthy of the general appearance of the building; and this is the chief ornament of the place. There is another church, besides chapels of ease, and different places of worship, for various sectaries.

THIS, and the neighbouring coasts, are frequented, in great abundance, by migratory wild fowl, of different species, when the winters are severe. On the breaking of hard frosts, they assemble in prodigious multitudes; mount like a black cloud on the horizon; then fall into their ranks, and immediately disappear.

VAST flocks of rooks sometime appear here, particularly in the cold seasons; when they are observed to be in quest of the periwinkle, a small shell-fish, found in great plenty about the Firth of the Clyde. A curious
instinct

instinct teaches them to fly up, a great height, into the air, with their prey in their beaks, in order to let it fall down on the rocks. The shell thus precipitated, breaks, by its own weight, at the bottom, and delivers its contents to the devouring hunger of the rook.

WE were informed, that great numbers of Highlanders have, these late years, poured into Greenock, to procure that subsistence on the water, which their own sterile mountains had so scantily supplied them. The settlement of numerous poor families have been the consequence of this accession; so that ample occasion is continually furnished for the exercise of a charitable spirit, which is said to distinguish the wealthier inhabitants of this place. But the greatest inconvenience, of which this, and the neighbouring port have, perhaps, reason to complain, is the multitude of their public-houses, and those every day increasing, for the sale of whiskey, and other spirituous liquors. What, nevertheless, we were told of the infrequency of riots, and disturbances in their public streets, is hardly credible, under a circumstance, so inauspicious

auspicious to the sobriety of the common people. Nor am I at all surpris'd to see, at this moment, that I am writing, half the populace of the town gathered together, in the square, and the streets opening into it, in order to behold the public whipping of seven or eight young pilferers; who, with their ringleaders, of maturer years, in their van, are just brought up for that purpose, within sight of our inn.—A suspense of some time has, it seems, taken place; till a proper executioner, some stranger to the town, can be procured. As we have no curiosity to become spectators of the punishment, we are going to avail ourselves of the moment, to make our escape; before all opportunity of egress is cut off by an increasing crowd.

THE necessity, or expedience, for I understand not well, which it is, of recurring, on this occasion, to external assistance, gives reason to suspect, that, notwithstanding the good order, which may commonly prevail here, the number of these unfledged rogues, not to mention adepts, is somewhat formidable; and that an executioner, well known, might be
exposed

exposed to their vengeance. Wherever men are drawn together, in large towns or cities, corruption of manners will necessarily ensue; but it is mortifying to reflect, that, as the wealth and prosperity of communities are only to be obtained by the united powers of many, that the depravity of the people is, more or less, the sure consequence of these advantages. But such seems the system of human nature all over the globe; that every good it possesses, or is able to procure, must be accompanied by a certain measure of evil. It is that balance of shade, as a painter would express himself, which must, in the picture of life, be always opposed to its brighter tints.

WITH these reflections, I am setting off from Greenock; but I hope something will soon occur, to divert them on our route.



LETTER

LETTER VIII.

Largs.

THE materials, which are to furnish this letter, having been collected partly on my ride from Greenock to Largs, partly during a short stay at this village, whilst a boat was preparing for us to cross the water to the Isle of Bute, and partly on our return from thence, two days after, I cannot settle to which date it most belongs; and therefore mark none.

THE first part of our route hither, lay through a barren, swampy valley, irregularly extended round us; and in which, except a few sheep, and black cattle; here and there, a field of oats, some spots sown with flax, and a bad carriage-road; there was nothing to remark, but the disagreeable dreariness of the general scene. After having gone about six miles, we bore rather to the right, and were again blessed with a view of the Clyde, which
had

had been so tediously intercepted. Sir Michael Stewart's wood-encircled castle, on its farther shore, assisted in restoring a pleasanter train of images than that, which occupied our minds for an hour or two past. Proceeding forwards, we came, not long afterwards, to Wemys Bay; a charming little recess from the Firth, on whose sunny bank, some Glasgow merchants have built, each a neat white house, one joining the other, and making, in fact, a single villa; with a green lawn spread out before it, to the water's edge, adorned with parterres of flowers, and backed with wood, and winding walks on the rising ground. Hither they retire, with their families, from their city, and its busy hum, for the summer season; to contemplate, in tranquillity, the brilliant expanse of the Firth of Clyde, assuming, at this point, where its outlets to the ocean are little seen, the appearance of a vast lake; the pleasant shore of Ayrshire, on the eastern side of the water; the two Cumbras; the Isles of Bute and Arran, with their woods, rocks, and promontories, and some part of the mountainous coast of Argyleshire, forming, altogether,

gether, its magnificent boundary. This chosen spot, with all the line of coast, running southward, for some miles, defended as it is, on the east, and partly on the north, by lofty hills, and open to the sun on the south, and the west, may be called the Baïæ of North Britain; and is, undoubtedly, that region of it, which enjoys the most genial climate.

OUR road from Wemys Bay, carried us beneath a long a range of romantic cliff, on our left; consisting of dark, but variegated rocks, overhung with wild shrubs, and larger trees, with cascades and fountains trickling down among them; and the Clyde on our right, with all the interesting scenery, just described, within our view. After some miles, the cliff, retiring considerably from the Firth, towards the east, presents a plain of some space; on which stands, delightfully placed, the village of Largs, on the northern edge of the county of Ayr. This parish is of some extent; being a good deal scattered. It possesses several neat houses, fronting the Clyde; and commands all that enchanting prospect

prospect, you are already acquainted with. You will not wonder, that so pleasant a situation should be resorted to, in summer, for sea-bathing, and the enjoyment of its soft air, and delicious scenery. The constant occupants of the village, are chiefly weavers, employed by the manufacturers of Paisley; and their number is not inconsiderable. In point of local situation, on which some of the most natural, and sweetest satisfactions of life depend, they have, certainly, the advantage of their masters. My second visit to Largs, was on a Sunday; when, from the appearance, and devout behaviour of the people, at the kirk, had I not been already prepossessed by some accounts in their favour, I should have conjectured them to be a set of very sober, and orderly beings. What effect the resort of sea-dippers, and other migratory idlers, followed, as they may be, by that train of easy naiads, who love to frolic on the more southern margins of the deep, may hereafter have upon these rural manufacturers, I wish not to presage; but, at present, both what I saw, and heard, spoke much in their favour. Whether the gentry of this parish,

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or of its neighbourhood, may be as seriously disposed, I know not; but that their gravity of humour falls short of that of old Sir Robert Montgomery, of the castle of Kilmorley, who lies buried in the church of Largs, may reasonably be supposed. This worthy gentleman, of other times, in imitation of Charles V. made it his melancholy practice, to descend into the family vault; and there, after contemplating the mortality of his ancestors, in the stillness of midnight, to perform certain rites of funeral devotion over his own coffin. The following short, and elegant inscription, still legible on the head of his coffin, and not improbably written by himself, confirms the fact I am relating:—
“*Ipse mihi præmortuus fui, fato funera præripui, unicum idque Cæsareum exemplar, inter tot mortales, secutus.*” You recollect Robertson’s remarkable account of Charles the Fifth’s celebration of his own obsequies, after he had abdicated the Imperial throne.

A YEARLY fair is kept at Midsummer, on the plain of Largs; but, through the multiplied means of commercial intercourse, which

which exist at present, it is much dwindled from its antient consequence. It was formerly supported by the mutual wants and superfluities of the Highland, and Lowland inhabitants of Scotland, who met here, in countless multitudes, for the purpose of bartering those different commodities, which each party were able to spare, for the benefit of the other. The sheep, horses, and black cattle, of the northern and eastern Highlands, here met the manufactures, and provisions of the opposite quarters. This fair continued for some days, and the spirit of it was kept up, not less by festivity, than business. The vast concourse of people, who flocked on foot, on horseback, in carriages, and in boats, at once almost covered the plain, and the Firth. Parties of music, dancing, and rustic games, mingled with the thoughtful sons of commerce, and care: All was movement, animation, clamour and din: and to have regarded this motley, and tumultuous scene in undisturbed quiet, from some of the neighbouring heights, must have been highly gratifying to a curious, or contemplative mind. "Out of Scotland, into Largs,"

is a proverb still heard in this country ; and, not improbably, owes its origin to that con- course of people, which poured from all parts of North-Britain, into this crowded plain, in the prosperous days of the fair.

The farmers of this lower country, have a custom of letting out their horses, as soon as their own stated tillage, and different works of husbandry are hastily finished, to the little cottagers, among the barren hills, above him : whence, their own agriculture remains in an unimproved state, and much less of their ground is brought into tillage, than its natural lightness of soil has rendered fit for it. This ill management is said to be equally detrimental to individuals, and to the community. It seems rather extraordinary, that none of the more enlightened proprietors, or patriotic gentlemen, resident in those parts, should not have suggested, or encouraged the application of some remedy, to so unprofitable a practice.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Isle of Bute, Sept. 2, 1792.

YESTERDAY afternoon, we arrived at this island, after a sail of full three hours, from Largs; the wind having been little in our favour. But the views, which we caught of the magnificent scenery, combined of land and water, continually shifting their aspect, as we moved forward, or tacked about, on our passage, concurred with the circumstance of pleasant weather, to compensate for the loss of time. The fine bay of Rothesay, on the north-west of the island; the town extending along its curvature, fronted by the harbour, consisting of a double basin, and quay of stone; together with the vessels moored on either side, and other objects of nautical appearance, give the approach to Bute, striking effect, and importance, in the eye of a stranger.

ABOUT thirty years ago, this town was in a state of indigence, and possessed only one single-decked vessel, and that of inconsiderable burthen; although the easy and commodious access to a harbour, affording in itself, the safest protection to shipping, might naturally have encouraged a spirit of commerce, and adventure.

UNDER the auspices of the late Earl of Bute, the industry, and emulation of the inhabitants of Rothesay, were first excited; and their vigorous perseverance has wrought so pleasing a reverse, as wonderfully to have advanced the prosperity of the whole island. In the short period, which has been mentioned, they have accumulated shipping, to the amount of 4246 tons. Sixty busses, amounting to 3104 tons, and carrying 715 men, are, this present year, employed in the herring-fishery. The rest of the shipping is engaged, either in the coasting, or the foreign trade; which Rothesay shares with Port-Glasgow, and Greenock. The nets, used in the herring fishery, are wholly manufactured here; as are also the barrels for the fish. The former

mer of these articles has been so much improved, by the craftsmen of Rothefay, as to have made them capable of taking double the quantity of fish, which nets of the old construction could do, so as to secure them.

THE borough of Rothefay was enfranchised by King Robert III. in the year 1400, when its castle was the royal residence*. What number of inhabitants might have been reckoned, whilst it was the scene of the court, tradition pretends not to ascertain. In succeeding times, they became very inconsiderable; and, till the year 1762, many of the houses lay in ruins. These have been since rebuilt, and several new streets added. The population of the town, since that time, has been doubled; and is supposed to be still increasing, whilst that of the whole parochial district, has made due progress; the entire

* If the derivation of Rothefay, from the Gaelic words *Riogh-fuidhe*, or *royal seat*, be authentic; in earlier times, this place must have been known by some other name. The parish, in general, which is considerably extended over the island, was called "Cilla Bhruic", the church having been dedicated to St. Broke. See Statistic Account of Scotland, Vol. I.

number of its present inhabitants, probably, not falling short of 5000.

But the flourishing state of Rothesay has not solely arisen from its herring-fishery, and its commerce. The establishment of cotton-mills, the effects of which have been very diffusive among the common people, has contributed to it in a degree, highly worth consideration. Individuals, of the lower class, able to work, need never remain unemployed; and, in fact, there is scarcely an idle person in the place. This is the first station in Scotland, where a cotton-mill was projected. The undertaking was patronized by Lord Bute, and received every encouragement from him, which the original adventurers judged necessary to ask, Mr. Buchanan, one of the proprietors, obligingly conducted us through the various parts of this extensive fabric. The first mill was erected about eleven years ago; and the second is very nearly finished. The great water-wheel of the latter, is 24 feet in diameter; and the breadth of its periphery, not less than six. This wheel is really a grand object; and

and its dark colour, approaching to black, combined with its magnitude, and prodigious power, when in motion, impresses a sublime idea. This vast body, in its rotation, communicates movement to a horizontal beam, resembling the mast of a first-rate man of war, and an hundred feet in length. Round this, are fixed a great number of vertical wheels, which turn as many horizontal ones; and these again, are connected with others, ranged above them, through four or five stories of the new edifice, alternately vertical and horizontal. The effect, procured by this whole combination of wheels, is the ceaseless whirling of many thousand spindles, and the regular movement of all that machinery, by which cotton is carded, spun, twisted, and every operation performed, till it is prepared for the loom. Five hundred persons, many of them children, are at present engaged in the mill, first erected; and the second, we were told, will soon require that number to be doubled. These thousand persons, with the assistance of this powerful machinery; more simple, than its vastness leads one, at first, to conceive, are able,

it is supposed, to perform the work of twenty thousand, without it. The great advantage, obtained in the cheapness of the whole mass of work performed, is too evident, to need intimation. After reflecting on the vast sum of effects, here produced, by one of the mechanical powers, we were naturally led to contemplate the invention itself, as one of the most laudable exertions of practical science, for the attainment of an object, so important to society, as the cheapness of work. And it was highly pleasing, to observe such a number of little hands, made early useful, in the application and removal of the materials, to and from this grand machine: Nor did it add little to the satisfaction, with which we had contemplated the scene, to have witnessed the appearance of health and chearfulness, in the generality of persons engaged in it.

THE only relic of antiquity, at Rothefay, worth notice, is the castle. Some good old burgher, of whom we accidentally enquired our way, was pleased to accompany us to it. This ruin is now so generally, and, I may say, so beautifully wrapped in ivy, that few
of

of its naked members could be discovered, till we penetrated the inner walls. Here our conductor pointed out the traditional bed-chamber, and banqueting-room, of Robert II. and III. They were the last kings* of Scotland, who inhabited this venerable pile. His information went little farther. And all we could learn elsewhere, in answer to our enquiries about the date of its erection, was, that the towers, and all the rest of the edifice, were of a much remoter, but unknown antiquity. This castle was, in succeeding times, the principal residence of the Stuarts; ancestors of the present Earls of Bute, descended from the royal family of Scotland, and long hereditary constables of the kingdom. It continued their place of residence, till burned by the Duke of Argyle, in the troubles of 1685. "I have seen the walls of Balclutha, but they were desolate. The fire had resounded in the halls, and the voice of the people is heard no more†." Most parts of the building, which remain,

* Robert II. came to the throne 1371. Robert III. in 1390.

† Ossian.

are mouldering away with age. Many of the stones are loose, and fragments so frequently fall, that we were earnestly warned, at almost every step we took, not to venture up this stair-case; over that arch; or beneath the other wall; if we meant to escape alive. You would have been oddly affected, betwixt amusement, and alarm, had you heard the particular questions and answers, which passed between our cautious conductor, and ourselves, whilst we continued within the precincts of the ruin:—"From the roundness, and breadth of those window, and door-arches, may it not be supposed, that the architecture is Saxon Gothic?"—"For God's sake, sir, hasten from that wall, or you will be crushed under its ruins."—"What do you conjecture, to have been the use of this subterranean?"—"The arch you stand upon, is giving way; you will slip through, ten fathoms deep, and be heard of no more."—"This was, probably, the antient keep, and that its dungeon beneath?"—"Take care, you don't get into it; or you may wait long enough for your gaol-delivery." With all this cold water, flung on the spirit of research,

search, the most decided antiquary, would have felt it considerably damped. Our own inferior ardour became very much chilled; and, therefore, after having examined such of the few parts, as were to be approached, without danger; and, contemplating the rest, rather shily, at a distance, we made a safe retreat; and took leave of our conductor; who seemed more ambitious (and could we blame him?) of saving us from destruction, than of gratifying our curiosity.

NIGHT was now coming on, and we retired to our inn, which we had left, two hours before, in perfect order, and tranquillity. But we had scarcely re-entered, and sat down to an early supper, meaning to retire soon to bed; when we suddenly heard a great deal of running up and down; the voices of men and women, in all the adjoining rooms; some talking, others singing, and whistling. Presently, struck up a merry strain of music, in a room directly beneath us: Dancing succeeded: The whole house shook: our table, our seats, our very plates and spoons, responsively partook the general move-

movement; as we ourselves did, a few minutes afterwards. For, as soon as we found, that all thoughts of sleep must be deferred, for a season, we descended, in haste, in order to see the company, and the ball. Having squeezed, with some effort, through the crowd of the passage, and door-way, many a bonny lad and lassie, did we see; who, having finished their day at the cotton-works, were, very nimbly, and not ungracefully, performing the lively evolutions of the Scottish reel. The dance, and the music, were national, and merited the attention of strangers. To give you, however, any precise ideas of the nature of the steps, with all the crossing, shuffling, springing, and friking of the dancers; or to describe their setting-to, their figuring in and out, and turning about; their clapping of hands, and snapping of fingers, would be impossible. There was something of all this, and more in the dance: every man had his partner, and the number of couples, in each reel, seemed indefinite. The music, and the dance, began very temperately, in a kind of *adagio* movement. Each couple glided gently along, for two, or three rounds; the
motion

motion increased by degrees, till it became brisker and more lively; at length wonderfully rapid; and concluded like the German vault, by each pair joining hands, and whirling round with a velocity continually accelerated,

—*Quo non aliud velocius ullum,
Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo**;

till the parties, growing giddy, began to reel and ended the dance, but when unable either to move, or even to stand any longer. I should not have omitted to mention, that a certain rapturous yelp, which every now and then escapes the male dancers in the height of their glee, seems to give new spirit to their movements. Considerable credit was due to that address and circumspection of the swains, by which they avoided trampling upon the naked feet of the nymphs, whilst most vigorously footing it very near them in shoes of a very massive sole. After a short pause the dance was renewed, and an agreea-

* Virg. IV. 174.

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ble young woman invited us to partake in it. As it was impossible not to have sympathized in the animation of the scene, I know not, that any thing but our ignorance of the steps and the figure, prevented our accepting the challenge. Our excuse allowed us, however, to remain spectators, which we did till the assembly broke up, and departed, according to their custom, about eleven o'clock. Such is the manner, in which the cotton workers, and young tars, returned from their sea-faring expeditions, amuse themselves on Saturday evenings, and particular holidays.

THE wealthier inhabitants of Rotherfay, remarkably regular in their deportment, permit themselves no other indulgence, beyond their own thresholds, than a little quiet visiting among their neighbours; except, that the men are fond of reading the news-papers at their subscription coffee-house; where, sometimes, the back-gammon table succeeds to politics. It is natural that those, who live in these insular situations, secluded from the world, should feel a lively curiosity to know, what

what is transacted in it. And the mercantile and manufacturing classes are said to frequent their coffee-house with some passion for this picquant gratification. Expensive amusements, or luxuries, have yet gained no ground at Rothesay.

HAVING procured a guide, and hired horses, we left Rothesay before breakfast, yesterday morning, in order to make an excursion into the island.

On the road, from the town to Mount-
 art, we wound pleasantly among hills, and
 green valleys; not inferior, in point of cul-
 tivation, or produce, to any which we had
 yet seen in North Britain. As we passed
 along the higher ground, we caught a view
 of Loch-Fad, or the Long-Lake, from
 whence issues that important stream, which
 is the prime mover of the cotton-works, de-
 scribed in my last. About a mile beyond
 this point, we crossed the east end of a small
 lake, called Aa-cog; on the borders of
 which the low level people busily en-
 gaged in reaping flax, one of the products
 of the island, whilst their children were en-

LETTER

LETTER X.

Isle of Bute, Sept. 3, 1793.

HAVING procured a guide, and hired horses, we left Rothesay before breakfast, yesterday morning, in order to make an excursion into the island.

ON the road, from the town to Mountstuart, we wound pleasantly among hills, and green vallies; not inferior, in point of cultivation, or produce, to any which we had yet seen in North Britain. As we passed along the higher ground, we caught a view of Loch-Fad, or the Long-Lake; from whence issues that important stream, which is the prime mover of the cotton-works, described in my last. About a mile beyond this point, we coasted the east end of a small lake, called As-cog; on the borders of which, we saw several people busily employed in steeping flax, one of the products of the island; whilst their children were engaged

gaged in launching a vessel, gallantly trimmed, with packthread cables, and paper sails; and, apparently, of not less than 80 or 90 ounces burthen, and drawing three or four inches of water. The little mariners exerted all their skill, and the vessel very speedily made its way across a narrow creek, followed immediately by another, of equal weight and dimensions; equipped with no less ingenuity, and sailing with equal success.

I should not have taken notice of these playthings, but that such naval expeditions in miniature, are the ordinary amusement of the young children of the island. We had seen several of these lilliputian parties at Rothefay, from three, and four, to five, or six years old, similarly occupied; and that, with an earnestness, which shewed their aquatic bias to be very strong. The herring fishery of that place, being in a flourishing state; and employing the thoughts and chief conversation of every order of its inhabitants; and, indeed, of the islanders in general, who are not engaged in the cotton-works; their male children, during infancy, imbibe scarcely

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ly any other ideas, than such as relate to water, and navigation. There are several persons in Rothefay, who have amassed many thousand pounds, in the herring fishery; without taking into account, the fortunes, which others acquire, who embark in the extensive carrying trade of the place. And it being a good deal the character of those, who get money in these regions, to place much of their happiness in saving it; the love of wealth, and the desire of accumulation, excite an universal spirit of competition in naval adventurers. The natural situation of no country, whatever, can be more fortunately adapted to encourage it, than that of North Britain, and its numerous islands.

AFTER we had quitted the little lake of As-cog, the next ascent brought us into sight of the south-east quarter of the isle, occupied by the residence of the Earl of Bute, and his extensive woods and plantations, which range far and wide, on the highest ground, and also clothe the declivities of many successive hills, down to the red rocks of the Clyde; the waters of which, not to mention

mention the beauty of those, which unite with it in surrounding the island, constitute that noble, and brilliant expanse, called the Firth of Clyde; no where to be equalled in magnitude, by the Thames itself, but where it opens into the ocean, below Sheerness, and the Nore. Illumed as Mount Stuart is by this superb river, continually reflecting the white sails, which waft, on its bosom, more than half the commerce of North Britain; and varied, as its prospects are, by the mountains of Argyleshire, on the north; on the opposite quarter, by the rocks, and green pastures of the two Cumbraes; the chearful village of Largs, beyond them; the brightness of Wemys Bay, with a long and sinuous line of the cultivated shore of Ayrshire; with these accompaniments, I say, the mansion, and environs of Mount-stuart, may challenge the most distinguished situations in this kingdom.

WISHING to examine the interior of so interesting a scene, I availed myself of the honour of being somewhat known to the Earl of Bute, to offer his lordship my respects. An obliging invitation ensued, which

put, into our power, the satisfaction so much desired ; not to mention the flattering circumstances of that hospitality, with which we were received.

AFTER a first cursory view of the house, and its environs, an interval of some hours, before dinner, remaining, we thought it most adviseable to re-mount our horses, in pursuit of our original excursion, and to defer, till the afternoon, a more intimate acquaintance with the scenery of Mountstuart, which we should then have opportunity of seeing at our leisure.

IT having been recommended to us, to call upon Mr. Thorburn, the minister of Kingarth, in whose extensive parish, the chief objects of our curiosity lay ; we saw nothing in our progress, which gave us more pleasure than the amiable frankness, and cordiality of the good pastor himself. After we had accepted a little refreshment, so offered, as not to be refused ; and conversed with him, a short time, on different subjects, relating to the island ; he expressed his regret, that a
par-

particular engagement at home, would not allow him an opportunity of shewing us what might merit our observation; but he offered us the company of his son; an intelligent young man, whose attentions we found very useful.

ON leaving the manse, he rode with us, first to the ruins of an antient Druid's temple; at least, what is here generally conjectured to have been one. Three large, upright stones, or rather fragments of rock, were only remaining; but the places, or foundations of six others, were still perfectly visible; as also, that of an altar, in the center of the circle, which the whole number had formed. Whether there had been an outward circle of these massive stones; or any others had been placed horizontally over them, as at Stone Henge, in Wiltshire; there appeared no vestiges, sufficient to determine. The three, which we found standing near each other, and the place of the rest, shewed their position to have been precisely circular. The diameter of the temple, may be about twenty feet: It had formerly

been furrounded by wood; and, at a small distance, all round it, we observed the remaining trunks of oak trees, whose shades had once given additional solemnity to this consecrated edifice. Another Druidical relic, of the same kind, is to be seen, betwixt the Bays of Kames, and Artrick, toward the northern part of this island. In surveying these monuments, the difficulty always recurs, of explaining the mechanical powers, if such they were called, in the rude times of their construction, by means of which, these ponderous masses of rock were moved.

HAVING gratified our curiosity here, we went about three miles further, to view the crumbled remains of an ancient fortress, on a lofty crag, near the sea, at the south-westerly part of the island. Nothing of the edifice remains standing. The stones, which composed it, lie in scattered heaps chiefly on one side of the hill. The curiosity of this object consists in the vitrification of a great part of these stones; a process by which, it is supposed, they were cemented together; for no trace of lime, mortar, or any other cement, is found

found attached to them. It is conjectured, that strata of wood and stone, in form of a wall, being first alternately placed upon each other, sods of earth were raised on either side to support them, and that then, the wood being set on fire, the upper strata of stone soon subsided on those immediately below them, and their vitrified sides meeting, whilst red-hot, became firmly attached to each other. It is not improbable, that sand and the fern plant, both at hand, might be mingled with the wood, or perhaps laid under it, to assist the vitrification. As the first strata would sink considerably in this process, successive additions were piled upon them, till the walls were raised to the height required. Mr. Blain, collector of the customs, at Rothesay, the ingenious author of a manuscript history of Bute, adopts, in a great measure, this conjecture to solve the vitrification, and consequent cement of this antient fort; if, indeed, this conjecture did not originate with him. This strong place was called, in the Gaelic language, Dungyle, or Dun-a-goil; interpreted, "the fort of the strangers;" and is supposed to have been

constructed by the Danes, or Norwegians. Mr. Thorburn, probably understanding the name to mean, "a fort against the strangers," is of opinion, that it was built by the inhabitants to defend themselves against the attacks of the former. As the northern people, just mentioned, certainly made many successful inroads into the island, and at some intervals, considered themselves as its principal proprietors, by right of conquest, there appears more difficulty in deciding the origin of this fortress than I will undertake to remove. A much smaller fort, of the same curious construction, stood at the north-side of the island.

THE situation of Dungyle, to a picturesque eye, would, perhaps, be less amusing, on account of the remarkable ruins of the fortress, than on that of the different prospects seen from its eminence. Toward the south-east rise the bleak rocks of Mountblain, with the hamlet of Garatie, just below its rudest craggs; a few trees wildly scattered round it. A little to the left appears one of the Cumbraes, and its light-house with admirable effect. To the

the south-west, dashed by the waves of the Clyde, pouring into the Irish sea, the lofty mountains of Arran, pinnacled with many a black mis-shapen crag aspiring to the clouds, with water-falls glittering betwixt them, present, altogether, a thousand circumstances of the truest sublimity; whilst, on the right, as the eye moves along the north-western shore of Bute, it catches the lovely isle of Inchmarnoc, and the long sweeping peninsula of Cantyre.

WE descended from Dungyle, and winding northward, round its base, surveyed certain columnar stacks of dark rocks, which compose this mountainous elevation; now formidably projecting over our heads. Beneath these rocks we entered the long windings of a cave, worn black by the eternal dripping of springs down its sides. For want of light we did not chuse to penetrate beyond forty or fifty feet: our companion informed us, that its depth was not known. In barbarous times, it is supposed to have been frequently a place of concealment to some enemy of the inhabitants; as it is, at present, to those

those of his Majesty's revenue, the smugglers. Its rugged bottom was strewn over with fish-bones; whose eatable parts had been devoured by the Otter, or the savage Biped just mentioned. Notwithstanding this den-like appearance of things, a botanist would have been delighted with the variety of aquatic foliage, which fringed its entrance. A Salvator Rosa would have sketched the scene with rapture; particularly at the moment, when a group of smuggling banditti had been celebrating their nocturnal orgies round a blazing fire, at the mouth of the chasm.

THE engagement, under which we had made this excursion, did not admit of our prolonging it; we, therefore, now thought of returning, and that partly in our former tract, that we might leave our companion at the manse, and acknowledge our obligations to his father. Although we wanted time for the inspection of any new scene, we were amused, as we rode gently along, with the young man's account of some objects which we had left unseen, and several traditional superstitions

tions relative to them. As I found them to accord with some insular stories, which I shortly after read in Mr. Blain's entertaining manuscript, and as they are characteristic of the popish credulity and strange customs of the antient inhabitants of the island, I need make no apology for relating them. Fancy yourself a hearer, returning with us to Mount-stuart.

THE isle of Bute is divided into two parishes, Rothesay, and Kingarth; in each of which were formerly several churches and chapels; three or four of them, at present, only remain. The most antient of the churches of Kingarth, was built at the south corner of the island, about the eleventh century. The ruins of it we might have seen, had our time admitted of it. This edifice was reared by the piety of St. Blain, about whom, we meet with the following tradition.—St. Cathan, an Irish bishop, attended by his sister, Ertha, came from his own country to the isle of Bute; with an intention of leading the solitary life of an hermit, in some chosen retirement.

Ertha,

Ertha, wandering about, unprotected, was accidentally met in the field by a young man, apparently of a superior station, and possessed of many personal attractions ; who, becoming suddenly enamoured of the lady, forced her to submit to his embraces. Ertha, in due course of time, found herself pregnant, and brought forth a son. Some barbarous persons, into whose hands she had fallen, as a punishment for her involuntary crime, thrust her, with her little infant into a boat, and committed them to the mercy of a tempestuous sea. Ertha, in silent despair, clasped the child to her bosom, smiling, and unconscious of their peril. After she had struggled long with the horrors of her situation, Providence intervened ; and the boat was driven to shore. Congal, and Kenneth, two holy men, walking on the sands, saw what had happened ; and, having learned of Ertha the cause of her misfortunes, took compassion upon her ; and received both the mother and the son into their immediate protection. They baptized the child, and gave him the name of Blain. He was educated under their care and direction ; and, becoming an adept

adept in theology, was sent to Rome, where he took holy orders. After some years, his learning and piety recommended him so strongly to the pope, that he was consecrated a bishop; and returning to his own country, presided over a city in Scotland, ever since since called Dumblain*. Deeply impressed with the history, which his mother had given him of his providential escape in infancy, he built the old church of Kingarth, as a votive memorial of his gratitude, upon his return from Rome. The situation, which he chose for it, is deeply retired, and the house of the minister, one end of which only remains, is placed beneath a precipice; and probably, at the time of its the foundation, was sequestered in wood. That no circumstance of sanctity might be wanting to his pious work, he brought a quantity of consecrated earth from Rome, to form the upper stratum of the burying ground. It happening, that some of the women on the coast, either re-

* This story may be found in Dr. George Mackenzie's *Life of Hector Boeis*, Vol. II. 422. He gives it on the authority of Dempster, and the latter on that of George Newton, who wrote the life of St. Blanus.

fused to assist in conveying the precious mould from the ship, or profanely negligent, let some of it fall by the way, St. Blain decreed, that none of the sex should ever be interred within the holy cœmety. Another piece of ground, called the lower church yard, was destined for that purpose; and, according to the saint's decree, was exclusively used for the interment of the females; it being then firmly believed, that, had their bodies been laid in the hallowed earth of Rome,

*Their bones, tho' canonized and bearsed in death,
Had burst their cearments—that the sepulchre
Had ope'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast them up again*.*

THIS superstition continued till 1661; when the Presbytery going their progress of the parochial bounds, a complaint was made of this practice of the separate burial of the

* “The Saint's order,” says Mr. Blain, “was carefully observed, the people entertaining a belief, that should they transgress, and inter the dead bodies of females, contrary to the injunctions, such bodies would be cast above the earth.”

sexes.

fexes. The assembly consented to its abolition; and, from that time, women as well as men have safely, though promiscuously been deposited in the favoured cemetery. Wives have not only been quietly inurned in the neighbourhood of their husbands; but have continued quiet ever since in the same company.

Not far from St. Blain's church, is still shewn the devil's cauldron; which, though vulgar tales, formerly current, of the evil spirit's purgatorial parboiling of the bodies and souls of departed sinners, are too gross for notice, is known to have been, in catholic times, a place of real penance, for living ones. "This cauldron, says Mr. Blain, thirty feet in diameter, is formed by a wall of dry stone, seven feet, six inches high, and ten feet in thickness, with an entrance from the east. It was a place of penance, as its name imports; such as Sir James Ware describes, in his antiquities of Ireland. Poor culprits were sometimes obliged to traverse the top of the wall, on their bare knees, a certain number of times, according to their demerit;

demerit ; whilst their path was covered over with sharp stones*. At other times, a number of these unhappy people were made to sit, days and nights together, on the floor, within the inclosure ; distressed for want of food, and necessitated to prevent each other from enjoying the comforts of sleep ; for it was inculcated in them, by their ghostly fathers, as an article of belief, that, if they suffered any of the company to slumber, before the time, appointed for expiating their guilt, was at an end, hell and damnation would be the lot of the whole ; and that they would be hurried from an earthly, to an infernal, cauldron. The poor, infatuated people, in order to avoid eternal torments, submitted to prick one another with sharp instruments, so soon as the smallest disposition

* The author of these letters remembers to have seen a ceremony of this kind, in the church of San Justina, at Padua ; where a number of rustic lubbers were waddling on their knees, round an ancient marble tomb, or altar, in the narrow space, between the main body of the shrine, and the columns, which surrounded it. The ruefulness of their visages, expressed much more pain of body, than devotion of spirit ; though they must have possessed no small portion of the latter. Their perseverance was really surprising.

to slumber, appeared to seize upon any of them.—In these better days, superstition is no part of the characteristic of Bute-men.

MOST of the inhabitants of the island speak the Gaelic language, in common with the Scottish dialect of the English. The former is their mother tongue, and the older people apparently prefer it, in their common conversation. When the natives are asked, whether they are high, or low-landers, they answer: “we are neither; but Bute-men.”

ALTHOUGH the climate of Bute partakes the general humidity, which prevails in the western regions of North-Britain, it is temperate and healthy. Young Mr. Thorburn's father, the winter before the last, had buried two persons at the age of eighty-four, and one, at that of ninety-four, in the parish which we were now traversing.

IT is a custom of these islanders, as it seems, indeed, of all the northern people, to pay great attention to funerals. The per-

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sons, who follow the deceased to the grave, are generally numerous; an entertainment* is made for them; and every man in the island keeps a suit of black with weepers, to appear in upon these occasions.

THE late lord Bute manifested a great desire to improve the state of agriculture in the island; and the farmers were benefited both by his encouragement, and the example of a better mode of cultivation, in those of his farms situated more immediately under his own inspection. From the present earl's attachment to the island, his attention to its interests and prosperity, and his occasional residence here, it is expected, that further improvements, still much wanted, in the state of its husbandry, will undoubtedly re-

* In Denmark and Sweden, a great dinner, or supper, is always given, upon these occasions, to a large party of the relatives, and friends of the deceased; and, not unfrequently, much hilarity takes place. I scarce ever heard a dead person spoken of there, without the epithet of "Salig Herre such a one." Happy Mr. Such a one; whereas we say, poor Mr. or Mrs. —. So that it should seem, some nations express satisfaction precisely on the same account, which excites regret in others.

sult.

sult. About one third only of the island is, at present, in tillage; though, from the nature of the soil, and the command of lime, sea-weed and coralline, a much greater portion of it might soon be rendered fit for grain of every kind. The remainder consists of pasture, woodland, mosses, moors and lakes. The greatest obstacle, it seems, to the due advancement of agriculture is the predilection, which the farmer's sons, and the peasantry in general, shew for the herring fishery.

THE men in this country are not accustomed to reap, or *shear* the corn, as they call that operation: the women always do it; and every species of corn, I understand, is reaped. The men, however, bind and set up the shocks*. Reaping and other harvest work are commonly paid not in money, but by the allowance of a cow's grass: the farmer finding pasture for the peasant's cow during a certain portion of the year. Engaged in conversation upon these subjects, we found ourselves, unawares, within the precincts of the Manse;

* Their name for them is *stocks*.

where, bidding adieu to our obliging conductor and his father, we hastened back to Mountstuart.

A LARGE fore-court forms the immediate approach to the house, and is sufficiently extensive to shew, without embarrassment, the whole front, which is of considerable length. The house consists of the main body and two wings, connected with it by colonades. The air and stile of this edifice are remarkably light and chearful from whatever point of view it is seen. Simplicity, neatness, and elegance characterize it both within and without. In the body of the house, fronting the garden, is a long breakfast-room, extremely pleasant, furnished with prints from the celebrated collection of Luton-Hoo. Beyond this, on the same side, is the drawing-room, adorned with a great number of family pictures, well executed, and nearly all, I believe, full lengths. From a symmetry in the size and disposition of these pieces, apart from their superior merit, as paintings, results an effect of grandeur upon the room itself, which cannot fail to strike the

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the eye of a stranger. In the other front, is a spacious dining-room; near it the library, which we did not see. Mention has since been made to me of a valuable antique, of the family, preserved here; the sword of the first High Steward of Scotland. The offices occupy the wings, the bed-chambers over them, of course, the upper part of the house.

As soon as we had drunk coffee after dinner, Lord Mountstuart, and one of his brothers, obligingly quitted the company, and walked with us round the garden and plantations.

A VERY extensive lawn is spread out in the eastern front of the house. This is bounded, on three sides, by the finest woods we had seen in Scotland, lofty, and of mature growth; consisting of oak, beech, Spanish chestnut, larch, mountain ash, pine of every sort, birch, American plane, &c. Of the species last mentioned, one was singled out to our notice, of very uncommon size and beauty: it challenges superiority over every tree in the surrounding woods. In coming

out of the house, at the breakfast-room, we were struck by the loftiness of the groves on the right and left hand of the lawn; and the more so, as they are contrasted by wood at the bottom of it, which, planted on a rapidly descending cliff, shews little but the light pointed tops of the firs and larches, agreeably intermingled on the declivity. The sinking position of the wood here, with its airy summits just peeping above the lawn, possesses, beside the effect of contrast, the advantage of allowing the eye to command, over it, the brilliant expanse of the Clyde, and the variegated shores beyond. Having enjoyed this magnificent scenery from the vicinity of the house, we followed the course of the terrace, round the northern side of the lawn, and, turning out from it afterwards to the right, found ourselves in a close covered walk, winding down the cliff; which led us, at the bottom, upon open ground, bounded by the water. Having reached the margin, we once more contemplated the Firth, and all its noble accompaniments; with which you are already acquainted. We next penetrated a deep wild scene of wood and thicket, which occupies

pies a considerable space betwixt the cliff and the water. The rocks on our right, as we moved onward, some bare, others covered with mosses of different hues, or shaded with dangling foliage, and projecting in variety of forms, failed not to amuse us, till the hermitage, an old ruin, overgrown with trees, came into sight. Having passed this with the pleasingly gloomy sensations, which such objects are calculated to raise, we had not rambled much farther in this sylvan region, before our ears were struck with the exotic sounds of the hennery, from a quarter unseen. Continuing our walk we found the cliff open suddenly into a narrow vale, or rather ravine. Curiosity led us to make our way through swampy ground and tangled thickets up one of its sides, till, by some untrodden way, we reached the rocks at the further end of it; where the difficulty of access was compensated by an undeveloped fall of water, which, with a little assistance of art, may be made an interesting feature in this quarter, and assert the justest pretensions to the dignity of a cascade. It has nothing, at present, but the character of retired and modest merit; to

which we lamented, that more encouragement had not been given. I know not, whether we did not take the liberty of intimating to our noble host, on our return, that nothing seemed wanting to produce the manifest improvement, of which it was capable, but the fostering effect of his lordship's particular notice. Tracing our way back from this recess we launched forward, with wider scope, into these delightful plantations. The sun being now set, a hollow breeze sprung up in the foliage above our heads, which, mingling with the distant murmurs of the Clyde; produced, as the dusk of the evening approached, that delicious impression on my spirits, which, you know, I love to cherish. We, at length began to ascend the cliff, and, after taking some little range in the woods above it, regained the terrace; at the end opposite to which we had commenced our excursion. Now, shortly emerging from our arched walk, we were brought back upon the lawn; where we rejoined the earl of Bute, and the company we had left.

AFTER

AFTER re-entering the house, where a chearful fire now attracted the company, we had not been long engaged in conversation round it, when we were suddenly diverted by music, proceeding from the lawn. Led, by the sound, to the door, we saw, in the solemn shade of the evening, Duncan Stuart, his lordship's piper, pacing, backwards and forwards, upon the terrace, with a gait full of enthusiasm, and bringing the finest strains from his national instrument, the bagpipe. The air, which we had heard, was, I think, the Galvise march. It partook the charming melancholy of the Scottish music; at the same time that it possessed the bold solemnity of a martial strain. The piper is expected to shew his talents, in these performances, by his extemporary variations upon the original air. Those of Duncan Stuart were very fine, perfectly in the stile of the march he had chosen, displaying a fullness of tone, delicacy of execution, and pathos of expression, worthy of the distinguished character which he has attained in the college of Highland pipers; where, it seems, he has received the honour of one of their annual prizes.—

The

The piper in Scotland retains to the great, as the harper does in Wales, and makes an article of their state. The proper habit of his situation is a superb Highland dress, with a cap and feathers. The pipers, in antient times, were always of the same name as the Thane or the Laird of the clan, in whose service he was retained; and, not unfrequently, in some distant degree of relationship.

AT no long interval, after this agreeable entertainment, followed supper, and retirement to bed at an early hour,

Sept. 3.

I AWOKE betimes this morning, and exhilarated by the rays of a vivid sunshine, playing on the objects, which I saw before my window, I quitted my bed, and repeated, in solitude, the walk of the preceeding evening, with some additional rambles among the woods of Mount Stuart, and on the shore of the Clyde; whose waters lay, at this time, reposed in a state of perfect calm. At one interval of my walk, I seated myself among the red rocks of the Firth, many of which are beautifully

beautifully incrusted with mosses, shells, and sea-weed, to contemplate, more at leisure, the varied scenes around me. A sort of visionary haze enveloped the lower parts of the horizon, on the opposite coast. The whiteness of Wemys-Bay, and the chearful village of Largs, were just discernable through its veil, which the sun was beginning to penetrate. The summits of the hills and groves beyond them appeared in all the lustre of his beams. At some moments my eye was amused with pursuing the flight of the sea-pye and the curlew across the water; whilst the cooing of the stock-dove, or the scream of the heron attracted my ear to the woods just behind me. Homer's description of some of the objects, in his scenery of Calypso's island, did not unnaturally associate itself with the images before me.—

————— O'er the world of waters Hermes flew,
'Till now the distant island rose in view.

————— A various sylvan scene
Appeared around, and groves of living green;
Poplars and alders ever quiv'ring play'd,
And nodding cypress formed a fragrant shade;

On

On whose high branches, waving with the storm
 The birds of broadest wing their mansion form ;
 The chough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,
 And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.*

Pope's Odyf. V.

ALTHOUGH one or two of Homer's objects and mine may not exactly correspond, the nature of the scenes agrees; and, I am sure, you will not churlishly reject the quotation of so beautiful a passage for trifles. A stroke, indeed, of many a quoter's pen had easily rooted up Homer's "nodding cypress," and planted a fir-tree in its room; but you

* Τῷ Ἰηλὸς πολέεσσιν ὀχύσατο κύμασιν Ἑρμῆς.

Ἵλη δὲ σπέϕ' ἀμφιπεφύκει τηλεθόωσα,
 Κλήθρη τ', αἰγιόρος τε, καὶ εὐώδης κυπάρισσ'·
 Ἔνθα δὲ τ' ἔριθες τανυσίπτεροι εὐιάζοντο,
 Σκῶπές τ', ἱρκές τε, τανύγλωσσοί τε κορῶναι
 Εὐνάλιαι, τῆσιν τε θαλάσσια ἔργα μέμνηται.

There appears not the slightest hint of a storm in this description, and as the admission of such an image would have disturbed the voluptuous indolence of Calypso's life, Homer, I am persuaded, took it for granted, that a contrary state of the elements would generally be supposed to prevail in this enchanted region; so that Mr. Pope will not be thought here to have improved upon his original.

will

will allow mine credit for having abstained from a deed of such temerity. With regard to the poet's "branches waving in the storm" whilst not a leaf of mine was moved by a breeze, I have to observe, that the storm has been only raised by the translator; and he must be accountable for its effects. As, however, so different a state of two of the most variable elements, during the time I was musing on the Clyde, might easily have taken place, as would have rendered "the branches waving in the storm," then entirely applicable to my situation, you may, perhaps, be disposed, to see the translator's accessory ideas in a pardonable light.——Of this enough.

I REGRETTED that no opportunity occurred, whilst I lingered upon this shore, of observing a circumstance, which frequently in calm seasons, adds an interesting vivacity to the scenery of the Clyde. I mean the brilliant and ærial spring of the porpoise from the bosom of the deep. This fish, as it were exulting in its vigour, is sometimes seen, at frequent intervals, to dart twenty or thirty feet

feet above the surface of the water; and in its descent, turning the mingled hues of its back to the sun, exhibits a variety of motion and colour, which never fails to surprise an unaccustomed spectator.

As I was putting up my minutes and quitting my rocky situation on the margin of the Firth, a number of shells and sea-pebbles, of various forms and colours, glittering in the sand attracted my notice, and bringing to mind a young relative, far distant, whom, I was sure, they would delight at my return, I filled one of my pockets with them, and then hastened back to the house; scarcely more pleased with a ramble, which had enchanted me, than the treasure it had furnished to enchant the heart of my little Anna.

I FOUND breakfast now ready, and my fellow traveller expecting my return. The party of last night, very cheerfully surrounded Lord Bute's tea-table, with the addition of a gentleman, to whose kindness I owe the article immediately following this letter:

THE

THE repast finished; we took leave of Mountstuart, much mortified to be under the necessity of declining an invitation, to prolong our stay, which so many circumstances had conspired to render agreeable.

M E M O I R,

COMMUNICATED

By JOHN BLAIN, Esq.

OF ROTHESAY;

Containing an Historical Sketch of the ISLAND of BUTE,
and a brief Notice of its Literary Characters.

THE island of Bute is situated in the Firth of Clyde, about twenty miles west of Greenock, and forty-two of Glasgow. From the coast of Ayrshire, it is distant about five miles. At the north end, it is separated from Argyleshire, by a strait, not exceeding, in some places, a quarter of a mile over. The extreme length of the island is fourteen miles; but the breadth does not, in any place, exceed four. This island, with those of Arran, the greater and lesser Cumbræ,

brae, Inchmarnock, Lamlass, and Pladda, all in the Firth of Clyde, compose a county; to which Bute gives name. Caithness, and it, send a member to Parliament, by turns.

THE western isles of Scotland, Man, Shetland, and Orkney, appear to have been frequently infested by armies of Scandinavians, from the year 738, till about the year 875; when those islands fell under the dominion of Norway; to which they, in general, remained subject, with little interruption, for many ages.

BUTE, and its neighbouring islands, were a subject of frequent dispute, between the Scots, and the Norwegians; if not during the whole time that the power of the latter subsisted in these countries, yet for a long period before the Ebudæ, or Western Isles, were ceded to the crown of Scotland. By their situation, so near the heart of the Scottish kingdom, descents could be made from these insular stations, by the one power upon the territories of the other. They were, in this view, more particularly important to the
Nor-

wegians; as they could, from hence, more easily annoy the Scots, than from any other place, where they had a regular established footing.

ACCORDINGLY, it appears, from monuments, whereof vestiges can still be traced out, that great solicitude was shewn to defend the island of Bute; to which our observations are here confined. The castle of Rothesay was a strong hold of such antiquity, that neither record, nor tradition, seem even to offer a conjecture, as to the time of its erection.

MALCOLM II. King of Scotland, made a grant of Bute, sometime before the year 1093, to Walter, the first Lord High Steward, who gave it away to a younger son; with whom, and his posterity, it remained about a century; when it was re-annexed to the patrimony of the Lord High Steward, by the intermarriage of Alexander the First, of that name, the Steward, with Jean, daughter, and heiress, of James Lord of Bute.

IN 1226, Hufbec, the feudatory king of the isles, laid siege to the castle of Rothesay; but, being bravely repulsed, was killed in the course of the enterprize, and his people were obliged to retire, after suffering a considerable diminution of their number. Olave, his successor, procured, from the Norwegian Monarch, a fleet and army, wherewith he proceeded against Dungad, who had set himself up as a competitor in the isles, and having seized upon his person, at Kiararey, near the sound of Mull, he from thence came to Bute, with eighty ships, and laid siege to Rothesay Castle. The garrison defended it bravely; and, by various methods, destroyed about three hundred of the besiegers. The force of the Norwegians and islanders was so great, that, after persevering some time, they took the castle by sapping, and found in it a rich booty.

How long after this, Bute remained subject to the Norwegians, is not precisely known. When Haco, of Norway, invaded Scotland in 1263, this and the other islands, in the Firth of Clyde, were in the hands of
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the Scots. These isles he reduced; but being defeated at Largs, on the coast of Ayrshire, opposite to Bute, the whole western isles were soon afterwards ceded to Alexander III. King of Scotland.

IN the fatal battle fought at Falkirk, betwixt the English and Scots, in 1298, the men of Buteshire, known at that time, by the name of the Lord High Steward's Brandanes, served under Sir John Stewart; where they were almost wholly cut off with their valiant leader. Edward of England, having obtained possession of Bute, kept it until 1312; when King Robert Bruce, took the castle of Rothesay, and recovered the island. Thither, Edward Baliol came in person, anno 1334, took the castle, and strengthened its fortifications. It was, however, soon retaken by the faithful Brandanes of the Lord High Steward, and was one of those occurrences, which first gave a favourable turn to the affairs of King Robert Bruce.

NEXT year, the king of England took an opportunity of repaying the Brandanes, with

usury, the ills they had done him. With a view to the extending, and securing his conquests in Scotland; he fitted out a fleet from Ireland, consisting of fifty-six ships. The most signal service, however, which they did, was to lay waste Bute and Arran.

ON the death of King David Bruce, in February, 1371, he was succeeded by his nephew, Robert, the Lord High Steward, afterwards King Robert II. from whom, the noble family of Bute is lineally descended. Robert III. son to the former, fixed his residence in the castle of Rothesay, during the latter part of his life, and died there the 29th of March, 1405. King James V. had also resolved to make this place a residence, and took some steps towards putting the castle into proper order, for his accommodation; but the future troubles of his reign, and his death, which happened at an early period of his days, prevented this place from again becoming a royal residence.

THE island suffered much afterwards, from factions, which disturbed the public peace;

or

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or from the inroads of neighbouring clans. Cromwell, in his time, garrisoned the castle of Rothesay; and to this island the unfortunate Archibald, earl of Argyll, came with his army in May 1685, when he had engaged in concert with the duke of Monmouth, to invade the kingdom. The earl brought with him from Holland three small ships laden with arms for 5000 men, 500 barrels of gunpowder, a number of cannon, and other implements of war. He had ordered his ships and military stores to an old castle, which stood on the rock of Elan-greg, near the mouth of Loch Riddan, opposite to the north end of Bute. There he deposited his spare arms and ammunition, under the protection of his ships and a garrison of 180 men.

At this time the inhabitants of Bute were plundered of almost their whole moveable property. After Argyle had been about ten days in Bute, having notice, that a great body of forces, three ships of war and some frigates were coming to attack him, he resolved on his departure. The naval armament ar-

rived accordingly, and proceeded on the 15th of June, to Loch Riddan, where the earl's frigates immediately struck to them, and the castle also surrendered. After removing the arms and stores into the king's ships, the naval commander caused the castle to be blown up. The earl's army was not able, after leaving Bute to keep together, for being disheartened by the loss of the ships and military stores, they thought only how to get to their respective homes. Lord Argyll, himself, was taken prisoner, at Inchinan, on the 17th of June, and, being conveyed to Edinburgh, was there beheaded. Soon after a brother of his returned to Rothesay, with a party of men, and, having surprised the castle, burnt it; and as Cromwell's people, at withdrawing from thence, had formerly destroyed its fortifications, so now it was rendered unfit to be employed longer as an habitation, and subsists, at this time, only as a venerable ruin.

Of men celebrated for their acquisitions in literature, who had their birth here, I recollect only these following :

SIR

SIR Robert Stewart, of Tillicutry, Bart. one of the lords of the council and sessions, in Scotland, and a commissioner, on the part of that kingdom, in concluding the treaty of union with England: He was younger son of Sir James Stuart, of Bute.

DUGAL Stewart, Esq. of Blairhall, nephew to the former, also a lord of council and sessions, and one of the lords commissioners of justiciary, brother to James, first earl of Bute.

DOCTOR Matthew Stewart, son to Mr. Dugal Stewart, minister of Rothesay, who, having been bred to the church, obtained the cure of the parish of Roseneath, in Dumbartonshire; but was soon afterwards promoted to the mathematical chair, in the university of Edinburgh, where he acquitted himself with great ability, and rendered himself famous by some publications, wherewith he favoured the world. 1st. Tracts physical and mathematical. 2dly. The distance of the sun from the earth, determined by the theory of gravity; together with several other things

relative to the same subject; being a supplement to tracts physical, and mathematical. 3d. *Propositiones geometricæ*; more veterum demonstratæ, ad geometriam antiquam illustrandam et promovendam idoneæ.—Mr. Dugal Stewart, the doctor's only son, while a very young man, was chosen conjunct professor of mathematics, along with his father, and discharged the whole duty himself, allowing the doctor to retire. The young professor gave universal satisfaction; and while Dr. Ferguson, who held the chair of moral philosophy, was abroad, as secretary to the commissioners, sent over to treat of a peace with the Americans, Mr. Dugal, with much celebrity, taught, both his own, and Dr. Ferguson's class. These two gentlemen afterwards changed professorships, and Mr. Stewart continues to teach with unabated diligence and reputation. He has lately published a valuable work, entitled, "*Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.*"

THE immediate predecessor of Dr. Matthew Stewart, in the mathematical chair at Edinburgh, was the celebrated Colin Mac Laurin

Laurin, who, though not born in Bute, yet drew his first breath about the distance of six miles from thence, in the adjacent parish of Kilmodan, where his father was minister. Mr. Mac Laurin's only son, lord Dreghorn, is now a distinguished judge in the court of sessions.

OF the family of Ambrismore, a son, Alexander Stewart, F. R. S. was eminent for his abilities as a political writer, and exercised his pen with great judgment, in defence of his country and countrymen, against the unprovoked and illiberal attacks of some of our southern neighbours, about the year 1761. He was afterwards promoted to the office of judge-advocate general of the forces in the East-Indies, and became member of the council of trade, in Bengal. He died in April, 1778. A sister of his was married to the gallant captain Macartney, who commanded his Majesty's ship, Princess Amelia, in the severe conflict between the British fleet, under vice admiral Parker, and the Dutch, under rear admiral Zoutman, on the Dogger Bank, the 5th of August, 1781; in which
action

action captain Macartney unfortunately lost his life, and his country, in him, an excellent officer.

THIS island also produced the late John, Earl of Bute, who was groom of the stole to his present Majesty, while Prince of Wales ; in which office he continued after his Majesty's accession to the crown, till, in March, 1761, his lordship was made one of the principal secretaries of state. In 1763, he was appointed first lord of the Treasury, and he resigned on the making of the peace. Although he experienced much opposition, and was severely assailed by party writers ; yet, their arguments turned chiefly on his being a Scotchman ; for, in his public conduct, he was most upright ; possessing the greatest zeal for the honour and interests of his Royal Master, and of the nation at large. In his private character, he shone with uncommon lustre. His lordship was well read in the sciences in general, and, from his particular predilection to natural history, wrote, though he never published, more than four quarto volumes on that subject. He was a great patron

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tron of learning and science, and his liberality was extremely great, where either indigent merit, or real distress, laid claim to his assistance. In this island, and wherever he was best known, his memory is justly revered.



LETTER

LETTER XI.

Dumbarton, Sept. 4, 1792.

THE water continuing calm the whole of the third instant, we rowed back to Largs; and having repassed Greenock, and Port-Glasgow, we crossed the Clyde at Erskine Ferry, to pursue our route northward.

A GREAT steel forge has been erected on the farther bank. The sounds of its operations reached our ears, and we should have been entertained with a sight of this manufacture. The different methods of making steel, whether by fusion, or by cementation, not to mention those of tempering and annealing it, are known to be very curious; but some difficulties, mentioned by our ferryman, of gaining admission, discouraged us from attempting it.

TURNING on our left, we proceeded, and came to Boland Bay, about eleven miles north-

north-west of Glasgow, where the grand junction-canal enters the Clyde. This bay is about a quarter of a mile wide, and fourteen feet deep, at high water.

AT a small distance from it, the busy scene of a large bleachery tempted us to dismount. We were first shewn some capacious boiling vats, constructed of wood above, and metal below, sufficiently large to receive fifteen hundred yards of linen or cotton; which here undergo their first operation of being boiled with soap and ashes.—Contiguous to these vats, is placed the washing machinery; contrived to dispatch as much work in an hour, as almost the whole host of wash-women at Glasgow could finish in a day. Several broad-headed beetles, of massive wood, or stocks, as they are technically called, being put into the action of hammering, by a large water-wheel, beat and press the cloths, which a rapid stream of cold water, passing continually beneath them, keeps turning on every side, till they have discharged their impurities. They are then thrown into a great vat, filled in a few minutes,

minutes, with cold water, by means of copper tubes, suspended above it. Being thus perfectly cleared of the soap, they are removed from hence, into a wringing-machine, made on much the same principle with that in Beetham's patent washer.—They are now entirely prepared for the bleaching-field; of which there are several in this corner of Dumbartonshire, of great extent and consideration.

THOSE cloths, which are intended to be dyed, or printed, are, when taken up from the field, steeped immediately in water, having an infusion of vitriol, and dried in spacious rooms, constructed for the purpose, with an infinity of apertures, to draw a constant current of air.

A SUPERCILIOUS fastidiousness would, perhaps, have carried some travellers by this kind of scene, as too humble for notice; but wherever great quantities of work, or great effects, for the benefit of society, are wrought by small and simple means, or great difficulties atchieved by ingenious contrivance, however

ever common the objects, or the materials of their operations, the means of performance may be well worth attention; and, where they are capable of being in some measure conveyed by verbal description, a traveller may contribute to extend their benefit. You will not suppose it in his power, during the short time to which his notice must be confined, to discover any secret processes, or mysteries, which particular manufacturers may have introduced. These, as well as patent-secrets, are always kept out of sight; or strangers are not admitted, where they may be discoverable. But from such parts as a traveller is allowed to see, he may sometimes be able to suggest new employments, and new resources for industry, in distant regions, at his return home; such as may be wanted, and are adapted to other situations. Some benefit to the public may then be derived from that information, which he can communicate, or but even hint upon subjects of this nature. Persons, the most indifferent to the advantages, may, at least, be amused with the representation of ingenious arts. But the philosopher will be delighted to find his

his theories in chymistry, hydrostatics, the mechanical powers, &c. more extensively reduced to practice: whilst the political economist must rejoice to see the multiplication of resources, for the benefit of the community.

AFTER these reflections, you will not wonder, that, at Melton, about a mile farther on the Dumbarton road, our curiosity was arrested by a considerable fabric for the printing of linens and cottons. It is situated just below a huge craggy rock, from whence pours a constant and copious torrent. Belonging to this establishment, we passed a very spacious printfield, in our way to the different edifices, destined to prepare the several articles, which covered it. Though a printfield is all picture, nothing, perhaps, can be less picturesque. Art, ingenuity, and taste, however, here displayed much to commend, and something to admire. The superintendant received us with civility; and, conducting us first to a very long and spacious room, directed our attention to a brick flew, which ran lengthwise through the middle of it,
from

from one end to the other. It resembles those which you see in hot-houses, and communicates a constant and regular heat to the whole room. On each side of the fiew, tables are placed, parallel to each other, all the way down. At one end of each, next the fiew, is set a colour-tub. On a bed of moistened colours, nicely prepared within it, and brought to a certain degree of consistency, the printer, one at each table, lightly and evenly presses his pattern-block, which is about a foot long, and of various width, according to the figure of the pattern; and immediately placing it, with precision, on the linen or cotton, spread out before him, on the table, strikes it smartly with a mallet. Whilst he is doing this, a boy standing ready at the tub, instantly effaces the impression which the block had left on the colours, restoring to their surface, at each interval, as much smoothness as possible, and that with great quickness and address. The heat of the fiew dries the colours, as soon as laid on, sufficiently to prevent their running. One block impresses no more than a single colour*.

lour*.—When the first impression is finished, which we saw carrying on in two different rooms, each piece is removed to the dying house, whither we proceeded next, and is wholly immersed, except a very small portion of one end, fixed upon a roller, and suspended across the vat. As this roller is turned about, the piece winds round it, and is thus drawn out again. The colours being now perfectly fixed, by the virtue of the drugs infused into the water of the dying vat, every piece next underwent a boiling in the copper, and then a scouring in the beetle-mill; processes already described in the bleechery.

A STREAM of warm water, from the dying vats, and the boilers, continually flowing off, as soon as it is done with, through

* I have since learnt, that several of the operations of printing, here described, are performed at Leven, in this neighbourhood, by water machinery. Much time and expence are said to be saved by this method, where practicable. The calicoes of Leven, are spoken of, as almost superior to any made in Great Britain. Some people have asserted, that the neighbourhood of London is scarcely to be excepted for its success in this particular species of manufacture.

different

different apertures, at the lower end of this edifice, forms two reeking cascades, whose vapour fills the air, as they roll down through their channels, on one side of the printfield, diffusing a singular effect over the whole scenery of the place.

THE pieces of cotton, or linen, are now laid out to bleach, in the printfield, that the parts left unprinted, either in the ground, or within the figures themselves, may recover their purity, and whiteness. When the pattern requires different colours, the piece is taken up, after some days, and returned to the printing-house, where the second set are stamped, and all the foregoing operations repeated; as they are, after every impression, of a new colour. But when the ground of any pattern is to be coloured green, the piece, after the figure has been duly printed, is sent to the pencil-room. This branch is performed by women and girls, and we saw many employed in it. The blue and yellow, whose union is to make the green required, are successively laid on by a painter's brush; the former being suffered first to dry. It was

pleasing to see the rapidity, accompanied with precision, which, by force of habit, these persons had acquired in working.

IN the last place we visited the workshop, where not less, I believe, than twenty young artists were engraving patterns upon blocks of wood. A thin plate of polished holly is inlaid, for this purpose, upon a block of plane-wood, properly fashioned. The blocks, when engraven, are painted of that particular colour, which they are intended to impress upon the cloth. We took notice, that each of the engravers had either a newspaper, or a book, laid behind the block, on which he was working. In this manner, they occasionally relieve the intenseness of application; and we may, perhaps, conclude, from this circumstance, that their work is paid for, by quantity, and not by time.

We understood, that the pattern-drawers, retained in this establishment, chiefly pursue their business at home. They ought to possess an inventive talent, and that is best exercised in retirement and solitude.

THE

THE situation of this extensive fabric is very striking, and would with such of its various appendages and operations, and the figures employed about them, as appear externally, furnish good scenery for a Flemish painting, in the manner of Teniers.

IN descending its declivity, which nearly fronts the south, we were delighted with a bright view of the Clyde, rolling its waves so conveniently for the exportation of the abundant products of these, and many other print-fields and bleecheries, in this neighbourhood to the various regions of the earth.

THE remainder of our ride to Dumbarton was not considerable. The evening was pleasant, and the sun, about to set, shot his rays across the Clyde upon the castle rock at the time of our entrance. The side next us was chiefly in shade, and that projected to a great distance; as this vast rock starts immediately from the level ground of the plain to the height of five hundred feet, overlooking the Clyde and the Leven at their point of

confluence. The fortress upon the top has, sometimes, been deemed impregnable, from its situation. History, however, mentions its reduction by famine, in the reign of Egbert, king of Northumberland, in 756, and by a famous escalade in 1571. It was the only place of strength, of which Mary Stuart had retained possession from the commencement of the civil war; and it was considered as the most convenient place in the kingdom to land any foreign force, which might have been sent to her assistance. Lord Fleming, the governor of the fortress, felt more than sufficient assurance of his security; for the practicability of an escalade being suggested, with some confidence, to the regent, he encouraged the idea, thinking the prize too considerable not to justify some hazards. Every approach was guarded, by which any previous communication of the scheme could have reached the governor. Captain Crawford, a gallant officer, marched by moonlight from Glasgow, at the head of a chosen band of daring and resolute soldiers. They approached the foot of the rock, just after the moon was set, and a sudden fog had enveloped the atmosphere.

Finding

Finding scaling ladders prepared, they lost not a moment in commencing their enterprise. The first ladder, which had been too hastily fixed, fell beneath the weight of the persons, who mounted it. Fortunately no one received hurt; nor was any alarm taken at the noise, which must have attended the accident. The captain and his followers, braving all their former difficulties, and scrambling again up the rock, after their conductor, found means, at a certain height, to fasten a ladder to the root of a tree. One of the assailants, who was ascending it before his companions fell into a fit, and was caught by a round of the ladder, about midway. All further passage up it was stopped. This circumstance was singularly distressing; but neither the captain's presence of mind, nor his humanity deserting him, he ordered the man, that he might not in his helpless state be precipitately rolled to the bottom of the rock, to be tied on the under side of the ladder. The rest then mounted without impediment; but, though landed at the top of the rock, had yet the high wall of the fortress to scale; and the day was beginning to dawn. All now depend-

ed upon courage, and the celerity of their movements: after that which had been achieved, the former could not easily fail; nor was the latter wanting to second it. A sentinel, seeing the first man mount the parapet, had scarcely a moment to give the alarm, before he was dispatched; whilst the garrison half naked, and unarmed, ran out in the utmost consternation; more anxious how to save themselves, than to repel the assailants. These, shouting aloud, rushed furiously forwards, and made themselves masters of the powder magazine, and then of the artillery, which they soon levelled upon their enemies. The governor flew, by a boat, into Argyleshire. All resistance quickly ceased; and Crawford, without losing a single man, remained master of the place. It may be questioned, whether history relates a more daring exploit than this. A soldier singly attacking armed numbers, who may assail him in the field of battle, after having made his first onset, is little more than a machine kept in motion by the impulse of high-wrought passion. But the wonderful resolution and fortitude

fortitude of Crawford and his men continued cool and undisturbed at every step, and under dangers and difficulties, whether certain or unforeseen. Success may be said to crown such an atchievement with the most dazzling lustre.

THE governor's house, fronting the Clyde, is situated nearly at the bottom of the rock, with a battery before it, defended by a garrison of invalids. This communicates with the higher parts of the castle, by a stair-case cut out of the solid rock. Near the top a port-cullis, or massive iron gate, antiently barred the entrance into the fortress. By this the upper part of the castle was effectually divided from the lower; a circumstance, which furnishes another anecdote to its celebrity. In the reign of Edward I. a square tower, reard betwixt the two grand peaks of the rock, was the continued asylum of the heroic Wallace, whilst an English force possessed the southern parts of the castle below. On the western peak, the highest and most difficult of access, stand the relics of an antient

tient watch-tower; a scite which commands the view of seven counties.

THE town of Dumbarton is built on the eastern bank of the Leven, in form of a crescent. It has some modern houses, but the general appearance of the place is antique. It derived the privileges of a royal borough from Alexander II. in 1221. The position of this town, though convenient for trade and manufactures, as the spacious levels of its environs are for bleecheries and print-fields, has been reckoned exceptionable on account of the occasional fogginess of the air, which, sometimes, has caused bad fevers. The small-pox and consumptions too have been more fatal than in many other parts. But I could not discover to what reason this has been owing.

DUMBARTON has the advantage of a safe harbour; and the salmon fisheries of the Leven and the Clyde, which succeed each other in the spring and the summer, bring some business to the town. But the establishment, of a glass-bottle and crown-glass manufactory,
and

and the print-fields in the vicinage, give its chief employment, and have contributed to increase its population.

THE glass-house is very considerable, and pays an annual duty to government of nearly 4000*l*. We obtained access to the crown-glass fabric, and were entertained with the brilliancy of the spectacle, which it afforded. The strong heat and clear lively blaze of the grand furnace, where the materials are fused, is a striking object, which will be noticed; but that which amused us most, was the continual movement of the artificers, to and from this copious reservoir, to take the melted matter on their long iron tubes, and their action of blowing it, by which, from the appearance of a small red hot coal, it assumes a globular form, and instantly becomes enlarged, hollow, and transparent: This being held a very short time within the mouth of a fiery oven, and blown a second time becomes a large oblate spheroid more and more transparent, still continuing red-hot. Put again into the oven it is soon drawn forth, and blown

blown still larger, into a perfect and magnificent globe; then twirled rapidly round four or five turns upon the artist's tube, it ends in a flat round plate, from four, to five feet in diameter. Having now obtained the most beautiful transparency, it shews the fires of the furnaces, and the brilliant operations already described, in motion behind it. These plates, as soon as finished, are born with great delicacy from the place in the edifice, where they were blown and fashioned, to the annealing furnace, capable of containing many hundreds of them; where they are set up, side by side, and almost touching one another. The fire is then suffered to expire by degrees, and, after a day or two, the glass having thus acquired its due degree of hardness, is removed and packed up for exportation. You will take it for granted, that I have omitted some of the minuter operations; but I hope you will not be dissatisfied with your entertainment, when you reflect, that I have been obliged to furnish it, from no better materials than stone, sand, and salts of ashes. If the dishes I have set before you were neither

ther abundant, nor substantial, you will not deny them to have been shewy; and whilst some praise may be mine for the taste and display of the treat, much more will be due to your own contentment and good humour.



LETTER

LETTER XII.

Arroquhar, Sept. 5, 1792.

ARRIVED at a pleasant inn, singularly retired, and at this time in perfect tranquillity, I shall be able to give up two or three hours to the recollection of my morning's ride; the result of which will, probably, be no very short epistle.

LEAVING Dumbarton very early this morning, as soon as we had passed the bridge, we wheeled round, to take a retrospective view of the place, and its principal accompaniments.

THE bridge, the clear stream of the Leven, gliding smoothly beneath it, and leaving the garden-walls of this old town on its banks, the masted vessels in the harbour, the antique church, the black streaming volumes of smoke from the glass ovens, and the castle in the back ground, seated on the two enormous crags of the celebrated rock, all grouped together,

together, presented a grand and singular scene. When the smoke of the glass fabrics happens, as it must frequently do, to be carried up pretty centrally in front of the rock, to a person approaching the town quite in the dusk of the evening, so that the ovens themselves be not discoverable, the black exhalation would, I suppose, seem to issue from the rock itself, and give it, strongly, the resemblance of a volcano.

Now turning again, we proceeded forward, and had not gone far, before a pleasant country opened to view, and we saw, on our right, the extensive printfields of Leven; which we understood to be the greatest in North Britain. A small space brought us within sight of Renton; where, standing at a small distance, on the hither side of the village, we saw a light, airy column, with an urn on its entablature, so advantageously placed, as to be an ornament to the adjacent country. When we came opposite to it, we alighted, for the purpose of a nearer inspection; by which the elegance of this monument, which we found dedicated to the late

Dr.

Dr. Smollett, lost less than objects of this kind sometimes do upon access. It is a round column, of the Tuscan order, erected to the memory of this distinguished person, by a relative, of his own name, of Bonhill, in the neighbourhood. On the tablet fronting the road, is the following inscription :

Siste. Vjator!

Si lepores ingenique venam beniquam,

Si morum callidissimum pictorem

Unquam es miratus ;

Immorare paululum memoriae

TOBIÆ SMOLLETT, M. D.

Viri virtutibus hisce,

Quas, in homine et in cive,

Et laudes et imiteris,

Haud mediocriter ornati,

Qui in literis variis versatus,

Postquam, fœlicitate sibi propriâ,

Sese posteris commendaverat,

Morte acerbâ raptus

Anno ætatis 51.

Eheu! quàm procul a patriâ !

Prope Liburni portum in Italia

Jacet sepultus.

Tali, tantoque viro, patrueli suo,

Cui in Decursu Lampada

Se potius tradidisse decuit,

Hanc columnam,

Amoris eheu! inane monumentum,

In ipsis Levinæ ripis,

Quas

Quas versiculis sub exitu vitæ, illustratas
Primis infans vagitibus personuit,
Ponendam curavit

JACOBUS SMOLLETT, de Bonhill.

Abi & reminiscere,

Hoc quidem honore

Non modo defuncti memoriæ

Verum etiam exemplo prospectum esse;

Aliis enim, si modò digni sint,

Idem erit virtutis præmium!

Stop, Traveller!

If humour, and a happy vein of wit;

If manners, painted by the most skilful hand,

Ever challenged your admiration,

Pause awhile, on the memory

OF TOBIAS SMOLLETT, M. D.

A person not slightly adorned with those virtues

Which deserve your praise and imitation,

As a man, and a citizen.

Conversant in various parts of literature,

After he had recommended his name to posterity,

By a happy exertion of original genius,

He was cruelly snatched away by death,

In the fifty-first year of his age.

Alas! far distant from his country,

Near Leghorn, a port of Italy,

Sleep his remains!

To such, and so great a man,

Was this column erected,

By his cousin German, JAMES SMOLLETT, of Bonhill,

Who, in the decline of his life,

Might rather have resigned this office of piety,

To be performed toward his own remains,

By a relative so prematurely deceased.—

P

IN

IN point of sentiment, you will not deny this epitaph to possess considerable merit; sentiment, neither wanting in elegance, nor pathos; but whether every word, or phrase, be so classically pure and legitimate, as the name of Dr. Johnson, who gave the lines some correction, would lead his admirers to expect, may be left to the determination of the critics.

As we might still reckon ourselves on the banks of the Leven, it was rather mortifying that the plan of our day's ride would not allow us time for a little detour from the main road, to visit the birth-place of Dr. Smollett, at Cameron. To compensate for any topic of amusement, which you may have lost by

Unavailing monument of affection!
 Placed on the banks of that Leven,
 Which resounded the first cries of his infancy;
 And not long before his departure,
 Its own praises, the tribute of his muse,
 Depart—but remember,
 That this monument is not solely destined to the memory
 Of the deceased,
 But meant to shew to others, if they prove worthy,
 That the same recompense may await
 Their virtue.

this

this omission, I will give you the descriptive part of an ode, alluded to in the preceding epitaph. It was written by Dr. Smollett himself, to celebrate the Leven, on which his native mansion stands :

Pure stream ! in whose transparent wave,
My youthful limbs were wont to lave;
No torrents stain thy limpid source,
No rocks impede thy dimpling course,
That sweetly warbles o'er its bed
With white, round, polished pebbles spread;
While lightly pois'd the scaly brood,
In myriads cleave thy chrystal flood;
The springing trout, in speckled pride,
The salmon, monarch of the tide,
The ruthless pike, intent on war,
The silver eel, and mottled par *.
Devolving from thy parent lake †,
A charming maze thy waters take,
By bowers of birch, and groves of pine,
And hedges flower'd with eglantine.

THE late Dr. Jortin, in a pleasing little ode, which, perhaps, you recollect in his " *Lusus Poetici*," compares the calm and noiseless tenor of a philosopher's life, to a gentle river gliding through a silent grove ;

* A small species of trout.

† The Lomond, from whence the Leven issues.

to such a stream, I would say, as Smollett describes the Leven; and such, indeed, as we ourselves found it. But what pity is it, that philosopher, as he himself was, in his moral sentiments, general habits, and in the culture of his mind; yet, Jortin's river, or his own smooth Leven, should have been no emblem of the course of his life! No; his life, from an unhappy concurrence of adverse circumstances, ill health, and an irritable temper, was, little of it, passed in philosophic serenity. A natural dignity, and elevation of spirit, united with superior intellect, greatly refined by letters, with a consciousness too, of the real importance derived from the influence of such talents, on the opinions of mankind, the first point of merit in a literary character, ill qualified him to brook opposition, neglect, or disappointed expectation. A passage, in one of his letters, addressed to David Garrick, expresses, in a lively manner, the chagrin he felt on a retrospective view of his career. "I am old enough," says he, "to have seen and observed, that we are all the playthings of fortune, and that it depends on something as insignificant and precarious,

as

as the tossing up of a halfpenny, whether a man rises to affluence and honour, or continues to his dying day, struggling with the difficulties, and disgraces of life *." The frequent occasion, which the passage itself supposes for this reflection, should have furnished more consolation than, I fear, it did to him, who made it.

SOON after we had left Smollett's column behind, and passed the village of Renton, we caught our first clear view of Loch-Lomond. But before I describe to you particular scenes, which presented themselves successively in our progress along its western shore, I will sketch a slight outline of its more general characters.

THE Lomond, considered in all its dimensions, is reputed the largest water, not communicating directly with the sea, throughout Great Britain. Whether it surpasses all those of the same kind, in Cumberland, and Westmoreland, in point of beauty, it would be as difficult, as you will think it needless, to de-

* See memoirs of his life, prefixed to the edition of his plays, 1777.

termine. It seems, at least, to stand unrivalled among those of Scotland. As we had no opportunity of ascending Ben-Lomond, the great mountain on its eastern shore, or any other eminence, sufficiently lofty, to command its whole expanse at one view, I must leave to your own imagination, the singularly grand effects mentioned by those, who have contemplated the whole lake, from such sublime heights,

THE length of this water, which stretches out almost duely north and south, is little short of twenty-eight miles. Its greatest breadth, at about four or five miles from its southern extremity, is seven miles. From that point, it gradually lessens northward, till we reach the middle; and, from thence, to its termination, on that point of the compass, its bed is confined within bounds, seldom exceeding a mile, and sometimes falling short of it. The whole outline is said to comprehend about a hundred miles,

ITS southern end, which, of course, offered itself first to our sight, is bordered by a low, but pleasant, and cultivated coast. Before

we proceed far, its western shore, particularly on the left hand of the public road, which we are pursuing, begins to rise into hilly ground, and the bright expanse of its waters soon becomes considerably enlarged. As we approach the broadest part, one of the larger of its numerous islands appears, and presently, others in succession; all varied in form and dimensions, and most of them beautifully wooded.

INCH-CALLOCH, or the island of nuns, has still the remains of a chapel, or church, half concealed in the fine wood with which it abounds: This is supposed an appendage to the convent of those fair recluse. How much their piety might have contributed to the fame of this structure, in its more antient days, I know not; but its having been the burying-place of the renowned clan of the Mac Gregors, during their prosperity, is a circumstance of much more notoriety among its traditions.

UPON Inch-Marin, a narrow island, extending about two miles in length, are shewn

the ruins of a mansion, formerly belonging to the family of Lenox. The Duke of Montrose, whose house and domain are situated at the termination of the Grampian Hills, on the south-eastern coast of the Lomond, is proprietor of Inch-Marin, which is now converted into a park, and stocked with fallow deer. Instead of these wild inhabitants, the island was, some years ago, occupied by mad ones; having been a place of confinement for persons insane. To these, is said to have succeeded, an order of ladies, who, in the phrase of Mrs. White's charitable advertisements, "had occasion for a temporary retirement." Abuses took place, mysteries were pried into, and discoveries made, that some of these fair recluses meant only, without vows of mortification, or penance, to veil themselves here, from the impertinent eye of the world. A dissolution of the order followed.

INCH-GALBRAITH is spoken of, as being the favourite resort of the osprey, or sea-eagle: I heard of no other inhabitants.

ONE or two of these islands exhibit, in great abundance, the gloomy verdure of the yew. Here, says the author of a poem, written to celebrate Loch-Lomond,

Was nursed this chosen tree
Planted of old, and rear'd with studious care,
To freedom sacred, and the public weal.

SOME spots of this little Archipelago consist chiefly of open green pastures; broken only here and there by small inclosures, or patches of wood. Others display very elevated hills, clothed with trees from their summits to the water's edge; their tops thickly tufted, and forming shades so impervious to the sun, as to have excited no small desire of enjoying their cool freshness in the warmer moments of our day's ride. Circumstances, however, would not allow us to embark upon the lake, in order to penetrate any of the delightful recesses, with which these clustering isles captivated our imaginations. I could not help, at least, deviating from the road into that admired peninsula, belonging to Sir James Colquhoun, whose residence, adorned with

with plantations, commands the finest points of the lake, and its environs. Returning back to the road, after this gratification, I rejoined my companion, and we shortly after found ourselves at the door of our little inn, in the sweet village of Lufs.

WHILST breakfast was preparing, I hastened to the banks of the lake, to enjoy a stationary survey of its beauties, beneath the sunshine of a clear morning. Taking my stand a few paces below the church, and the minister's house, in a lovely situation contiguous, I caught, on either side, an extensive reach of the water, interrupted only by jutting rocks and promontories, or picturesque sections of one or two of the islands. The transparent azure of the lake, through which were distinguishable its many coloured pebbles, and lively vegetation of aquatic plants; not far beyond them, groups of trout, or salmon, in glittering movement, just beneath the surface; and, near the opposite shore, the reversed scenery of woods, rocks, green pastures, flocks, cottages of shepherds, and other rural objects, on the lower stages of the Ben-Lomond; the intermediate

mediate parts of the expanse enlivened, from time to time, by some white sail chancing to pass across it; or the moving reflection of clouds skimming airily through the horizon, and tinting the water with their various lights and shades; all these circumstances, I say, united, failed not to excite a thousand delicious sensations, which I wished to prolong.

SUCH scenes are quitted not without casting “many a longing, lingering look behind.” I fauntered slowly back toward the inn; but not without peeping into the precincts of the Manse, and then visiting the church-yard, sequestered among trees. The church, and every thing round it, was wrapped, at that moment, almost entirely in a deep broad shade.

THE solemn stillness and repose of the scene, strongly contrasting the vivacity of that which I had just left, drew my steps irresistibly towards it, to indulge a little melancholy musing among the memorials of the dead. I recollected your predilection for churches,

churches, placed as this is, from whence, on one of the more distant islands you might hear,

The far-off curfew sound
Over some wide water'd shore,
Swinging slow with solemn roar.

Few of the graves in this cemetery are unprovided with some monumental stone, inscribed with affectionate testimonies to the deceased beneath them. These stones, in general, are better ornamented in North-British church-yards, than in our own. Whether upright, or recumbent, we find upon them, neatly painted, in the soberer colours, the death's head, hour-glass and bell, with other symbols of mortality. The inscriptions simply import the name and age of the dead, and sometimes, moreover, a short character, not incorrectly written : The stone is rarely disgraced with any of those senseless and miserable rhymes, so disgustingly repeated with us twenty times in the same church-yard, and exciting an involuntary ridicule, peculiarly discordant to that pensive tone of spirits, which they love to cherish, who come to meditate

meditate over the tombs of friends or relatives, with whom may have departed every thing held most dear by their survivors. Perhaps the interference of the clergy, earnestly directed to this object, might prevent the disgrace of their cemeteries, by the indecorum of absurd and nonsensical inscriptions. Might not that order of parishioners, chiefly concerned in these reflections, be, without difficulty, prevailed upon, to consult their minister previously to the choice of these memorials, or at least to beg his revision of them? The rustic moralist would be as well taught to die, if decency and common sense were to find their way into the epitaphs of our country church-yards, and if those unlettered muses, who have hitherto inspired them, were banished for ever from consecrated ground. This matter is certainly better managed in Scotland; where, in these common receptacles of our mortal part, persons of higher order and education, seriously disposed, may, without hazard of impertinence, not unprofitably loiter in pursuit of the same awful lesson, in which every son of man is equally concerned. After having ruminated
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in an undisturbed train of thought, during my pause among the tombs of Lufs, where one, perhaps, announced the uncertainty of life, another its momentary duration; this the suddenness of its end; that the labour and sorrow of old age; where one inscription bewailed the fall of beauty in its bloom; another that of strength in its vigour; a third of wealth or greatness in the midst of splendor and prosperity, and many the hope of passing from this vale of misery, to the land of everlasting life; after having ruminated, I say, for some space on such a scene, think you, it were possible, that I, or any other could quit it, without feeling, in some degree, familiarized with the frown of death, somewhat better prepared to meet his inevitable stroke, a little more reconciled to the descent of our bodies into these chambers of mortality, to Ossian's narrow house, his cave of the rock, the christian's sepulchre, or silent vault.— Or to express myself in my present itinerant character, more resigned to the certainty of migration from hence to

That undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns.

I MENTIONED

I MENTIONED having, *en passant*, cast my eye upon the Manse: I hinted the loveliness of its situation; but, without any intimation, you would have concluded it. I neither know, nor did I ask, who its clerical occupant is. He cannot be offended, if my imagination represents him under no other character, than that of a pious, well-informed, and contemplative clergyman, gifted with genius, and capable of appropriating, by divine right of enjoyment and taste, the supremely beautiful scenes around his station, on the Lomond lake. Will he not pardon me, if I often fancy him in a fair summer's morning, like this, on which I have viewed it with so much delight, pacing with enthusiasm on its banks, and exclaiming, with the great poet of his country,

O! Nature, how in ev'ry charm supreme,
Whose vot'ries feast on raptures ever new:
O! for the voice and fire of seraphim,
To sing thy glories with devotion due*!

AFTER going back, for one moment, to the margin of the lake, to catch a recapitu-

* Minstrel.

latory

latory glimpse of its various beauties, as its whole surface lay reposed in the most perfect and brilliant calm, I returned reluctantly to the inn, partook breakfast with my companion, whose curiosity had led him to different points of view; and we departed immediately after it, from the sweet village of Lufs.

As we proceeded, our first view was a valley, luxuriantly green with corn, opening on our left hand, and bounded by a number of conical hills, rising almost to the height and magnitude of mountains, of remarkably smooth and agreeable aspect, and ranged singularly, round three sides of this recess, in the form of a horse-shoe.

WHEN we had coasted the lake, to about the sixteenth mile-stone, the road now passing over abrupt cliffs, and hanging promontories, we commanded a grand sweep of the water, stretched out beneath the eye, for many miles, and, toward the shore, running into shady bays, or losing itself beneath impending rocks. We frequently turned back on our steps, to enjoy these freer, and more open

VARIOUS PARTS OF SCOTLAND. 225

open prospects of the lake, till our road, now chiefly ascending, began to conduct us through groves of various forest wood; sometimes hanging over our heads, from the cliffs, on one hand, and descending down them, on the other, to the water's edge:

Overhead up-grows
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
Chestnut, and pine, and fir, and branching elms;
A sylvan scene, and as the banks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view.

HERE we were contented, at times, to catch only glimpses of the lake, through casual apertures in the wood. The water began now to be confined within narrower limits, as we approached its northern termination, and, in some degree, to lose its consequence; unable to detain the eye from the wild, stupendous crags and towering scenery of the Ben-Lomond, and other lofty mountains, becoming now the principals of the scene. When we found ourselves, again, closed up in wood, which frequently happened for some length of way, we were, at one step, entered

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tained with the varieties of beautiful foliage, waving over our heads; at another, with the moss-grown stems of antient oaks, or pine, their diversified forms and positions, or their roots half discovered, and fantastically wreathed about the rocks; but above all, we were delighted, and refreshed, with the falls of frequent torrents and cascades which took their progress down the sides, or over the summits of precipices, sometimes glittering in our view, at others rolling through concealed channels, beneath our feet, and thundering down the steeps, to join the waters of the Lomond. In one sequestered spot, near the road's side, carpetted with green herbage, shaded by trees above, and half inclosed in rocks below, down which a beautiful rill trickled, in many a bright maze amidst variegated mosses, aquatic plants and flowers, we heard, overhead, the solitary stock-dove mingling his murmurs with those of the stream. We found it impossible to resist the temptation of breathing awhile the delicious coolness of this romantic grotto; which failed not, whilst we reposed ourselves in it, to recall to our minds a passage in one
of

of Horace's Epodes, nearly describing the scene, and its circumstances :

Libet jacere sub antiquâ Ilice :

Modò in tenaci gramine

Labuntur altis interim ripis aquæ,

Queruntur in silvis aves,

Fontesq; lymphis obstrepunt manantibus,

Sommos quod invitat leves.

WHEN, after some farther progress, we quitted the delightful region of the lake; we had only to regret, our want of opportunity, to hunt the roe-buck, in the wild forests of the Ben Lomond, to pursue the ptarmigan or osprey, with our guns, on its summit; or to trace out, among other rare vegetables on its side, the *sibaldia procumbens*, which the botanist seeks in vain among the more southern hills of our island.

INSTEAD of pursuing the track which leads to the northern extremity of the lake, we turned on our left hand, within sight of Tarbut, and came, after a short space, to the noble inn of Arroquhar. It is situated, as I

hinted to you before, in an unsuspected retirement, and that on the Loch Loung, enveloped with wood and mountains, and decidedly in the Highlands of Scotland. An air of gloomy grandeur surrounds this mansion; antiently the residence of the lairds of Macfarlane. About the middle of the 13th century, Haco, king of Norway, sent a fleet, of sixty sail, up the Loch Loung; which, though it has here the appearance of a lake, is, in fact, an estuary, receiving the tide of the sea, and is salt, quite up to its termination at Arroquhar. Haco's forces, having made good their landing, ravaged all the neighbourhood, before they returned to their ships.

HERE it is, that I have been writing this long letter, which I shall conclude, as soon as I have directed your eye, across the water, to a very lofty crag, on the summit of a mountain, opposite our windows, which presents a grotesque piece of rock, so exactly like the figure of a cobbler, in his working attitude upon his stall, that it never fails to suggest that resemblance to every traveller, who sees it. Every moment I have raised my eye,
from

from my paper, to dip my pen into the ink-stand, I have not been able to use it, till I had first glanced my eye at the cobbler. It is, really, a most whimsical *lusus naturæ*, and I wish you were here to partake the amusement it affords us*.

* Had I not, for the present, relinquished the biographical part of my plan, my life of Buchanan, was intended to have followed this letter; as that celebrated poet and historian, was born in the neighbourhood of Loch Lomond



LETTER

LETTER XIV.

Inveraray, Sept. 6, 1792.

UPON leaving Arroquhar, late this afternoon, we turned on our left, round the head of Loch-Loung. An hour's ride, brought us to a narrow passage, where we suddenly entered the vale of Glencro. We now passed along, immured betwixt mountains, high and craggy; in some parts, almost meeting over our heads; in others, retiring, so as to leave space on one side, or the other of the road, and giving us opportunity to contemplate their acclivities; here, half covered with large masses of shattered stone, which had tumbled from their summits; there, exhibiting a few patches of wild vegetation, for the pasturage of sheep, or goats; farther on, huge rocks, running in ledges, of a wall-like surface; others shooting up with rude pinnacles into the air; or, in narrower parts of the vale, half suspended in menacing projection, over our heads; the whole

whole succession surprising us, at almost every step, either with their magnitude, their boldness of position, or their strange varieties of form or colour. What the final syllable of Glen-cro, or croy, according to some, may mean, in the Gaelic tongue, we did not learn; but dreary wildness, and desolation, are the characteristics of the valley. We scarcely saw a tree, and but a single house, with an appendant cottage or two, in our whole traverse of the Glen; and we were told, there were no more. When the evening closed, and withdrew all distinction of minuter objects from our notice; the scene, for some time, lost much of its wildness, but increased proportionably, in solemnity. The only light object, which now caught our sight, was a solitary star, twinkling over the ridge of a mountain; except the white foam of some of the cataracts, pouring down the sides of the hills; whose sounds, I may add, mingling with that of our wheels, and of our horses, echoing among the rocks above, disturbed that deep, and universal silence, which may be ranked among the general

characters of the vale. At some moments, where no fall of water was near, we stopped short, and remained motionless, to experience, in its perfection, the awful stillness of this solitary region. After we had been winding about five miles through the Glen, we mounted a rapid steep, which carried us, at its descent, on the other side, by a sharp turn, into the valley of Kinlafs. The evening, which, at first, was cloudy, now became clear enough, to shew, to some advantage, the grand sweep of outline on the ridges of the mountains, on either hand, and enough of the internal scenery, for us to distinguish, though but faintly, its resemblance to that which we had already passed. The length of this valley appears little less than the former. Having made our exit from it, we perceived ourselves on the shore of some large water, the remoter boundaries of which were all invisible. The night grew chill, and we were glad, after a short space more, to reach the comfortable inn at Carndow; where, by the side of a blazing wood fire, I have been writing so much of this letter.

RISING

Sept. 6.

RISING early this morning, we found ourselves on the banks of Loch-Fyne, one of the largest estuaries of North-Britain. It is more than thirty miles in length, and communicates with the open sea, on either side of the isle of Arran. It is a noble water, considerably varied in its outline, by creeks and promontories, and is, at certain seasons of the year, the crowded resort of herrings, and of those engaged in the fishery. Its waves reflected the rising sun, at our departure from Carndow, so that I need not add, we saw it to great advantage. At the northern extremity, we turned round short on our left, and directed our course on its western side. The mountains, among which we rode last night, extended their broad, and lofty masses, along the opposite shore, opening a transient view across the water, into the vale of Kinlafs. The country, on our right, was, for some time, of much humbler aspect, than that just mentioned; but it possessed the advantage of contrast. It began, however, to rise, as we proceeded. Wood, at some distance, appeared on the cliffs, and the elevation of the
ground

ground became more and more observable. The lake grew wider toward the right, but to what extent, was not visible, till, having coasted it, five or six miles, we doubled a promontory, which had intervened, and burst suddenly upon a large bay, more than half round which, are theatrically ranged, the superb woods and plantations of the Duke of Argyll; covering all the ground, to a vast extent, from the plain, up to the summits of the mountains, rising into the clouds behind them. The castle, a grand square edifice, with a tower at each of the four corners, and a high glazed pavillion, shooting up above them, from the center of the roof, presents itself among the lower woods, which open so, as to give the front an expansive command of the water. About a mile south-west of the castle, and directly opposite the promontory, which we had just passed, stands the town of Inveraray, regularly built, of white stone, fronting the bottom of the bay with a line of handsome buildings, on a uniform plan. The town, the bay, two handsome bridges flung over the Aray, the Duke's castle, woods, and princely domain, the aspiring heights of Dunecoich,

Dunecoich, with the watch tower, on its summit, offer, altogether, a theatre of objects, of unparalleled brilliancy and magnificence. Our approach to Inveraray, from the point, where we first caught the view of this grand assemblage, kept almost the whole of it within command of the eye, for the space of an hour, as we followed our road along the curvatures of the bay.

ON our arrival at the town, we were not surpris'd to find the first house of the conspicuous line of buildings, which I mentioned above, to be our inn; because no country has handsomer, or better inns, than Scotland; nor were we surpris'd, that it should possess many well furnished rooms, and, apparently, all proper accommodations within, and without, except the attendance of servants. The deficiency, in this article, was too singular, not to deserve notice. A little straggling stable-boy, whom we met, by chance, in the vestibule, conducted us to a room above stairs. He promised, at our desire, to send up a waiter immediately, with breakfast; which we wish'd to dispatch, as soon as we could,

could, that we might make the best use of a fine morning, in our intended visit to the castle, and its environs. After twenty minutes expectation, however, nobody appeared, and we began to feel some impatience. Making repeated applications to the bell without success, we went down, and called about us, in the aforesaid vestibule; all doors appearing to be closed below, by which access might have been found to our landlord. Some time, and much exertion of lungs, brought the straggling stable-boy again into sight. We renewed our orders for breakfast; the urchin his promises. Ascending to our room, we waited sometime; but nothing came. A fresh peal upon the bells (for we tried those of different rooms, which happened to be open) was rung with emphasis, and perseverance: and at length, something in the guise of a waiter, suddenly tumbled out of bed, much dishevelled, opened the door, heard our wants, and disappeared. We sat down in hope: time flew: all remained quiet upon the staircase. My companion drew out his watch, shook his head, twirled the chain two or three times round his finger,

ger, then walked round the room, casting, now and then, a look at Bowles's coloured prints, on the wainscot: I contemplated my spurs. Not now in the smoothest humour, we began to feel the additional irritation of hunger: We descended, once more, with some rapidity. Doors were still shut below: no straggling stable-boy in the vestibule: we went into the back yard, made enquiries of the ostler; and, sending him, and our own servant, in quest of somebody to serve us; after a quarter of an hour, our waiter returned, better kempt, but not more ready. We remonstrated, and intreated by turns. We assured him, we had waited much more than an hour: He seemed surpris'd at our hurry; told us, coolly, that his mistress would shortly rise, to give him out tea, and that then he would bring us breakfast, without delay. Frequent disappointment weakens confidence: We took the resolution of looking out a coffee-house in the town; but finding none, returned, with mortification, to our inn. The door of access to our hostess was at length opened. I stepped hastily over the threshold; collected
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for explosion, and was beginning to play off the whole volcano of my wrath. A soft answer, accompanied, as it was, by female grace and beauty, turned it away: it did more: it instantly charmed my wrath into good humour. My brow was smoothed: Hunger itself became gentle and well behaved; and, instead of waiting three minutes at her request, I had contentedly waited an hour, had it so pleased this fascinating woman.

BREAKFAST over, we ordered dinner: The day continued delightful, and we hastened to the Duke's plantations.

It was impossible to enter them without reflecting, that the rigours of climate contend in vain with art, wealth and perseverance. Till the middle of the last century, all here was naked heath and rock. The best that could be said of the situation, was, in the language of Ossian*, "that it was a desert,

* This, and the rest below, are scattered passages from the war of Caros, Inis-Thona, and the battle of Lora.

tinged

tinged with the beams of the west."—"Here the children of the lake convened around the sounding shield."—"The long grass was withered; they heard the breeze whistling there." "A distant torrent faintly roared.—The rocking hills echoed round: the starting roes bounded away." All, in short, was wild, cold nature. About 130 years ago, the marquis of Argyll, we were told, began to plant a few trees, which "the storms, having bent, spread their whistling branches around." But how wonderful the change, which has taken place with the progress of time! The whole region round the castle, is, at present, most luxuriantly arrayed with woods and groves, in full growth and beauty, from the brow of Dunecoich, to the borders of the lake; not to mention the vast plantations, continued from behind these, to the most distant hills and vallies of the domain. Nor is the variety, which we saw, more to be admired, than the good taste and effect displayed in their disposition. These woods, when we surveyed them within, from the extensive spaces opening toward the lake, on all the varied forms of
ground

ground above, below, and round the castle, reciprocally borrowing from, and lending grandeur to that edifice, impressed me with such multifarious images of greatness and beauty, as, I believe, will never be effaced. Although I learned from the person, who conducted us, some interesting particulars relative to the history of the place, yet, as I find a sketch*, to the same purpose, well drawn, in Sir John Sinclair's statistic account of Scotland, and, undoubtedly authentic I shall take the liberty of extracting it for your amusement.—“ Although the family of Argyll, upon their coming to Inveraray, conformed to the customs of the times, by building a very large and strong castle, toward the river†, within a small distance of the present one, (which has only been pulled down twenty years) yet it does not appear, that, for many ages, they did any thing considerable toward the improvement, or establishment of the place, till the middle of the last century, when the Mar-

* By the Reverend Mr. Paul Fraser.

† The Aray, which winding its course through the ground, not far from the castle, falls into the Loch-Fyne, and is one of the ornaments of the place.

quiss

Marquiss of Argyll began to plant a few trees; some of which are still extant. It is probable, that he was early diverted from his purpose, by the confusion of the times, and that nothing was afterwards done, till the re-establishment of the earl, his son, sometime between 1663 and 1670. During the short period of his possession, it appears, that he had particularly bent his thoughts toward beautifying the family seat; and almost the whole of the trees, about Inveraray, are of his planting; and still remain a singular instance of his good taste and discernment, respecting that which was best adapted to the nature of the soil and climate. Some of the most admired avenues, rows of trees, and plantations, are of his designing, and shew plainly, had he lived longer, that much would have been done, upon a very large scale, even at that early period. Since the beginning of the present century, the several successors to the estate, and honours of Argyll, have been particularly attentive to extend their plantations, and to embellish the place. About the year 1745, the present castle was begun, by Archibald, Duke of Ar-

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gyll;

gyll ; and, after a short interruption, during the rebellion, it was resumed, and finished. Since that time, a great sum was annually expended, by his successor, the late duke, and by the present, in making inclosures, in building, planting, improving, making roads, (which in this parish are highly finished, and kept in excellent repair) and in other works of utility and decoration. It is said, that the money laid out at Inveraray, since the year 1745, does now amount to the enormous sum of 250,000*l.* and, that the present duke, since his accession to the estate, has expended, at the rate of 3000*l.* per annum. Happily for his family, and his country, Newmarket has not engrossed his attention ; and hence, a considerable part of his great revenue was fortunately employed for more useful projects ; in promoting the general improvement of his estates ; in giving employment to the poor, and in extending industry, and manufactures. Thus, also, he was induced to give his lands to his tenants, on reasonable terms ; and hence, if they are sober, and industrious, none in their station of life, need live more comfortably. Accordingly, the numerous tenantry,

try, on his grace's estates, are so much satisfied with their situation, and attached to their great proprietor, who, even in these peaceable times*, refuses to listen to any proposals of an augmentation of rent, from shepherds, or store-masters, which might have a tendency, unless where conducted on proper principles, to distress the natives, and to depopulate the country; that, were it necessary, there is, perhaps, no subject in Great Britain, who could bring so great a number of persons into the field, in defence of his sovereign, and of his country."

AFTER we had enjoyed the impressive effects of the grand, and beautiful objects, which present themselves under such happy combinations, from the various stations on the lawn; understanding, that the castle would be more conveniently seen, at a later hour, we were conducted to take a view of the court of offices, which are at some distance, and kept out of sight, by the disposition of the wood. It is a large square space, surrounded with buildings, partly for the use

* This was probably written about 1791.

of carpenters, smiths, and other artificers, employed on the works of the place. But the object chiefly worthy of notice here, is the singular drying barn, or barns, constructed to obviate the effects of an unfavourable climate. They are very capacious in their dimensions; have several tiers of beams, running parallel, at convenient intervals across the breadth of the room; and from one end to the other of its length. From each of these, are suspended a great number of long poles, filled with pegs. Upon these, are ranged, as soon as they are cut, the sheaves of wheat, barley, oats, &c. too often stacked in the highlands, before they are dry, and under the disadvantage of immaturity. Being, by this ingenious contrivance, exposed to a free circulation of air, admitted through different apertures in the building, they are made perfectly dry, and preserved in a sound state, for threshing. The duke's whole harvest, in wet seasons, and some of it in all, undergoes this commodious suspension.

THE riding-house, and other exterior edifices, for purposes of use; the Gothic dairy, partly

partly for use, and partly for effect on certain views, are all worthy of the place, and in a stile of noble simplicity. We visited his grace's extensive nursery of trees, &c. destined to give additional embellishment to the surrounding country. We were not surprised, to find a spacious kitchen-garden, a hot-house, on a large scale, 120 feet in length, and a great extent of wall, covered with fruit; but to be assured, that standard pears, apples, cherries, &c. which we saw in considerable abundance, attain their maturity, and an excellent flavour, in so northern a situation, was more than we expected. A well-chosen exposition, the advantage of the most improved, and best adapted soil, with proper attention, and management, on the part of a gardener, will do wonders; and to have them performed, is that proof of beneficent power, which a great man owes to the world, and to his own dignity, and pre-eminence. It was to see wonders, that we came to Inveraray; and we were not disappointed.

WHEN we contrast the original nakedness, or rather nothingness of this country, the na-

tural forms of the ground excepted, with the great and lovely creation which has been raised out of it, the whole resembles an effect of magic.—Who is the magician; and where is his wand? We find the former in the noble race of Argyll; the latter, in their genius, opulence, and spirit.

To what quarter soever, our movements were directed, the domineering heights of Dunecoich, its shaggy, and broken sides, here and there prominent through the wooded steeps, commanded attention, and excited curiosity. Our time fortunately permitted, and we ascended to the watch tower, on its summit. This building derives its merit from its characteristic situation; and this is all it was meant to claim. In times of war, or civil dissention, no enemy, unless in nights of universal darkness, could have approached the castle, by land, or by water, without being discovered at a distance, from this very elevated point. But we mounted the heights of Dunecoich, not to discover armed legions, or hostile fleets; but, in an interval of national peace, and prosperity, to survey, at our ease,
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their best blessings, scattered by the lord of the castle, over a barren desert; to contemplate a lively scene of commerce, on the beautiful estuary beneath; and the highland rocks and mountains, in the distant horizon around us.

AT our descent from Dunecoich, it was time to visit the castle. This structure stands, every way, nobly disengaged from other objects. Its antique castellar form, aided by the blueish tinge of the micaceous stone, of which it is built, affords admirably with the scenery in its neighbourhood. We enter it by a lofty guard-room, provided with armorial furniture, and ornaments, suitable to the stile of a highland castle. In the space, and the fitting up of the interior apartments, convenience, grandeur and elegance seem to have been equally consulted. The decorations are highly splendid and beautiful, and many of them finished with exquisite taste. There is, indeed, a lightness, and brilliancy, in the general fashion of the ornaments, which it was impossible not to admire, at the same time, that we felt their tendency, to efface

the awful emotions excited, on our approach to the castle, by the stern and Gothic air of its exterior aspect, and the martial stile of its entrance. But, perhaps, this transition from the austerity of the antique, to modern gentleness and refinement, may have been dictated equally by ingenuity and good taste. By what criterion are we to determine, that a strict uniformity had been preferable to the variety here admitted? The sum of our satisfactions is, undoubtedly, increased by the latter; but that which turns the balance on the side of genius, if not of taste, in the present case, is, that the antient form of the exterior castle, and the modern fitting up of the apartments, beyond the entrance, as they must be seen successively, cannot fail to suggest to strangers, who visit them, (and many they are) the antiquity, on one hand, of the family, who inhabit it, the insecurity of barbarous times, and the necessity of strong defence; pleasingly contrasted, on the other, as they penetrate, and advance into the interior, with every mark of that improved, and civilized state of society and manners, which has,

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at length, spread itself into the remoter regions of our prosperous, and happy island.

IF I have seized the leading characters, and design of this stately edifice, it is all I intended. To enter into a detail of its ornaments, and particularly of its pictures, in the way, which has long prevailed among travelling connoisseurs, requires a vocabulary of artificial, and conventional language, which I am far from pretending to possess.

To descant upon painting, as an art, whose first intention is an imitative expression of visible objects, through the medium, of delineation and colouring; to consider it as an organ, through which are represented the great, the beautiful, or extraordinary characters of nature; to refer the principal merits of a picture, to her standard; in historical painting and exhibitions of human life to seize those actions, passions, and characteristic circumstances, which make the language of a piece, and explain its story; to estimate its effects upon taste, and manners; to discover
those

those leading, and original conceptions of superior artists, in their treating of particular subjects; the grounds altogether, on which they chiefly aim, to consecrate their names to posterity, seem, generally, much less the ambition of professed connoisseurs, than to display their knowledge in the mechanic of the art; in the effects, for instance, of light and shade, the keeping, the management of drapery, the grouping of figures, the ordonnance of the piece, its anatomy, colouring, harmony of composition, the stile of schools, and the manner of particular masters. And yet, if a sensible, and attentive spectator, be supposed capable of understanding, and judging of all those greater points of the art, addressed to the universal intelligence and feelings of mankind, though he may not comprehend its mechanical departments, never profoundly known but by those practiced in its execution; is there, do you imagine, any good reason, why he should concede, so bashfully, all right to canvass the merits of a picture, before the plausible fluency of dilettanti, and connoisseurs?

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As more time, however, is requisite for this higher species of criticism, than I have been, or shall probably be able, to allow myself, during the present tour, I can enter very little farther, on the subject of painting, than its general effect, in the decoration of some of the more distinguished residences of great families in Scotland.



LETTER

LETTER XV.

Dalmatic, Sept. 6, 1792, at night.

THE first part of our ride hither, from Inveraray, lay either among, or on the verge of the Duke of Argyll's plantations, which, from every eminence, we beheld, spreading out, over hill and dale, to a great distance. It was near an hour and a half, before we reached their boundary, toward the quarter, whither we were travelling. A country succeeded, almost destitute of wood, abounding with black cattle, horses, and not wanting in sheep. The peasants were, in some places, mowing with their long-handled scythes, stirring the hay with their hands and arms, carrying it on panniers, or drawing it with single-horse sledges, to put it up into small temporary stacks, according to a custom I have before mentioned; others were reaping their forward oats, or binding the crop in sheaves; for harvest, and hay-time, not unfrequently meet in the highlands. The scene was humbly rural; and though strongly

strongly opposed to all we had left behind, the diversity was not disagreeable. The peasants had the appearance of contentment; and, employed, under the evening sun-shine, in their various tasks of rustic labour, gave life and movement to the country. Though every habitation we passed, was as mean, and almost as artless as an Indian hut, it was pleasant to see their inhabitants, from time to time, going in, or coming out of them, with cheerful resignation in their looks; whilst their children were playing about the doors.

AT about nine miles, on the military road, from Inveraray, we came in sight of Loch-Aw, and the mountain of Cruachan, on its north-eastern extremity. This lake is reckoned, by some persons, among the most picturesque in the highlands. Its length is near thirty miles; in breadth, it is no where supposed to exceed two; and it runs generally less. It possesses many pretty islands, tufted with trees: On one of them, scarcely larger than a spacious church-yard, we discovered, at some distance, the ruins of an antient church. Whilst no other object caught our attention;

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imagination amused itself, with figuring the lively scene of boats, filled with the good people of antient days, rowing themselves thither, from a scattered neighbourhood, on the sabbath. We represented them, landing in many successive groups, men, women, and children, and shortly, all assembled about the church-porch, to wait the arrival of their pastor, whom we presently see landed; and, as he passes through them, greeted, on either sides, by sincere and respectful salutations, which he returns with paternal cordiality, and winning attentions. Nothing can be conceived better adapted to cherish that quietness of spirit, and recollection of mind, so necessary to the exercise of true devotion, than this silent, and sequestered islet.

THIS lake discharges itself into an arm of the Atlantic Ocean, at a place called Bunau; where there is a salmon-fishery. A foundery of iron has been established at this point. The lake is said to abound with salmon, char, trout, and eels. Perhaps you are unacquainted, that this last mentioned fish, in such good estimation with us, is held in abhor-

horrence by the highlanders, who consider the eel as a water-serpent, and unfit for man's use, as an article of food. As the lake supplies such plenty of other kinds of fish, and the vicinity is not populous, this prejudice, as our experience gives us a right to call it, will, probably, long remain—and so much the better for the eels!

BEFORE we had left Loch-Aw behind us, the sun had set, and we had still some miles to our intended quarters. On walking up a long steep hill, where we had alighted to ease our horses, I overtook a young female Highlander, with whom I entered into conversation. We were now deep in the regions of the Gaelic tongue; but she had acquired English enough at school to speak it intelligibly, and I was well amused, for half an hour, with her stories relative to objects about us, and the superstitions of the neighbourhood. Although night was now advancing apace, and “the glimmering landscape faded on the sight,” the Ben-Cruachan, elevated 3390 feet above the level of Loch-Aw was not to be so concealed. The great outline of this mountain was sufficiently

ciently visible to attract the notice of me, and my new companion. From the summit of the Cruachan issue the waters of the lake below. These come from the "fatal spring," but what she told me of the fatal spring will be best communicated in the language of a Highland Poem, communicated to me by the ingenious Dr. Mac Intire of Glenorchay, and founded on a tradition formerly current in that vale.—" Bera, the aged, dwelt in the cave of the rock. She was the daughter of Grianan, the sage. Long was the line of her fathers : large and fertile were their possessions : hers the beautiful vales below, and hers the herds that roamed on the hills around. To her was committed the charge of that awful spring, which was one day to prove so fatal to the inheritance of her fathers, and her fathers race. —Before the sun should withdraw his beams, she was each night to cover the spring with a stone, on which sacred and mysterious characters were impressed. One night this was forgotten by the unhappy Bera. Overcome with the chace and the heat of the day, she was seized with sleep before the usual hour of rest : the long confined waters burst forth into the plain

plain, and expanded themselves into the lake below*. The third morning, Bera awaked from her fatal sleep: She flew to remove† the stone from the spring; but, behold, no stone was there! She looked mournfully toward the inheritance of her tribe: She saw the devastation of her plains. She shrieked; the mountain shook from its base; she fell prostrate on the heath; her spirit retired to the ghosts of her fathers, in their airy halls."

ALTHOUGH my highland nymph did not relate her story of the Cruachan, in poetry, I found her not unprovided with Gaelic songs; and I did not remount our carriage, which had nearly overtaken us, till I had prevailed upon her, to favour me with one. The air was melancholy, and highly elegant, in the stile of the old Scottish music, so universally

* The Loch-Aw.

† This was her morning's task. What became of the water in the day time, it is vain to ask, since tradition and poetry are both silent. The potency of the mysterious characters on the stone, was alone, able to confine it for a night; but as philosophy is puzzled, how to dispose of the day's accumulation, it is pity that the poet, to whom means could never be wanting, has not provided for that circumstance.

S admired.

admired. The subject of it, she informed me, was love, and that her song was an old one. Her grandmother had taught it her, with many others, to her mother; and her family, she said, had always been fond of the songs of the highlands. My curiosity, which had not slept before, began to be something more than awakened. Hey-day! said I, to myself, who knows, but I may have been listening to a descendant of one of the old bards? long may have been the line of her fathers, and old Ossian, himself, her great progenitor!—Fingal, Swaran, Hidallan, the son of Lamor, Comala, the daughter of Sarno, Cuchullin, with Carril, and Connal, of other times; Agandecca, and a hundred others of Ossian's heroes, bards, and beauties, were crowding into my mind, and I was just going to examine what acquaintance my Gaelic songstrefs might have with them; and from whence she derived it; and many more questions, of some tendency toward the solution of the celebrated problem, the authenticity of Ossian; when, most provoking to tell, the road, like problem itself, became, at that

that instant, divided, and looked two different ways. The songstrefs bidding us adieu, took that, which branched off to the left; and, soon disappearing, in the hazy dusk of the evening, she descended into the vale of her kindred, to sing of the loves of the chiefs; the glory of the days of old.

WE proceeded on the main road; but, as we understood, we had still three miles to go, and it was growing gradually darker, we feared, should some new separation take place, we might no longer be able to distinguish the right way. So long as we kept the principal route, all was well; but the next diverging line might lead us astray. More than one occurred; we puzzled along, as well as we could; but the idea of being lost in the night, in some unfrequented wild, among the highlands, was not exhilarating. We had been informed, that our inn was a single house, close to the road-side. No house, however, was yet discoverable. We began to cry out with the elder brother in Comus:

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Some

Some gentle taper,
Though a rush-candle, from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long levell'd rule of streaming light,
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Such a light, at no great distance, presented itself, on a sudden turn, after our descent of the next hill. From several circumstances, we thought it not improbable, that it might shoot across the plain, from the very house we were in quest of. We ventured to keep the road, which apparently led to it; and, in less than half an hour, found ourselves, well pleased, at Dalmalie; the name of our inn, on the entrance of the vale of Glenorchay.



LETTER

L E T T E R XVI.

Tyndrum Sept. 7, 1792.

THE scite of Dalmalie opens a long, and pretty extensive reach, into the pleasant, but wild vale of Gleporchay* ; so called, from the river Orchay, which winds agreeably through it. This vale is formed by a considerable recession of the mountains from each other, leaving large open plains betwixt them. There is little wood ; the only circumstance wanting, to render it very beautiful. The objects, which first, and principally strike the eye, in a general survey of it, are, besides the gentler elevations, which bound it, those two enormous mountains, the Cruachan, and the Ben-Buie, frowning in rude opposition to the green lowly meadows, and gentle meanders of the Orchay. So much may suffice, to give the general aspect of Glenorchay, as it appears, from the environs of Dalmalie.

* Argyleshire.

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WHIST

WHISLT I was writing, last night, at the inn, upon every opening of our parlour door, the obstreperous conversation, and singing of a circle of merry highlanders, in an opposite room, broke in upon me too forcibly, not to cause a little interruption. These moments were not, however, quite lost. I learnt, from a number of different speakers, that the accent, and pronunciation of the Gaelic, is extremely guttural; though the sound of the language is otherwise agreeable, and not much unlike that of the Hebrew, as spoken by the German Jews.

ALTHOUGH our hostess, and her son, both spoke English very tolerably, in conversation with us, we heard nothing else there, but Gaelic, from every body else. Our language, however, is daily gaining ground: most of the rising generation of highlanders, are taught it at school; and can, when it is necessary, make themselves well understood in English. Many persons too, of middle age, possess something of it: those more advanced, have, in general, had little opportunity of acquiring it, and will, to their dying day,
speak

speak only their native tongue; no other, according to Lord Monboddo, than the venerable language of Adam and Eve. Little did I believe, when, some years ago, I was pretty earnestly occupied in the acquisition of languages, that my ears would ever have been blessed with those primitive sounds. And now, but for that happy genius of discovery, which marks the present enlightened age, as it is called, I might even here have heard them, with vulgar disregard, for want of knowing better. Yes, I might have been insensible to the inestimable happiness (for who can deem it less?) of having heard the fascinating sounds of that language, in which the serpent tempted the great mother of mankind. But let serious people be advertised, that, in expressing myself thus, it is only in the assumed character of a linguist, or antiquary; and that these sentiments of admiration, know how to keep their distance, before the awful decrees of our ruling powers, who, ever since the union, and more particularly since the rebellion of 1745, have been using means to extirpate this diabol-adamical

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language from every corner of the Highlands. English schools have been founded by government, or by the contribution of individuals, all over the country, for this purpose. A very respectable one, at Glenorchay, has been established, under the auspices, and immediate support of the Earl of Breadalbane. The learned languages, too, are taught in this seminary; not to mention other branches of good education. It is, at present, numerously attended, and flourishing in its credit; so as to be considerably instrumental to the important object of civilization. From opportunities of observation, which fell in my way, in the Isle of Bute, and in the progress of my tour, and still more, from good information, I should conclude, that there is great aptitude, and docility, in the young highlanders, for the attainment of our language, unlike, as it is, to their native one. The time allotted for their schooling, on the charitable foundations, cannot be supposed very long; as all the poorer people's children share the benefit in turn; and their maturer years cannot be spared from the labour of the country, or such occupations, as the manufactures,

factories, or the fisheries of Scotland may find for them.

WITH regard to the civilization of the highlands; many circumstances, beside the cultivation of our language and other advantages of education, have concurred to its advancement. The abolition of clanship must be reckoned among the first in its effect; the establishment of the three forts with their English garrisons; the military roads; the improvements in agriculture, trade and manufactures; the occasional residence of the Scottish nobility, and opulent gentry; travellers from England and the south of Scotland, whether led by curiosity or by business; and even parties of gentlemen, who visit the highlands about autumn, for the diversion of shooting, or the chace, deserve all to be taken into this account.

NATIONAL prejudices and superstitions are every day wearing out, and the happy consequences of the union become more and more visible. The highland dress, which, for so many ages, had been a peculiar object of national

tional attachment, has, in a great measure, given way to the British mode of attire. It is not now very common to see persons completely habited in the old manner. One wears a hat instead of a highland bonnet; another puts on a lowland coat upon his filibeg; a third retains his cap and hose without any other articles of the antient dress. This man quits his brogues for a pair of shoes; the other flings his tartan, or plaid, over his British waistcoat, or small cloathes; and so warmly, I am apt to believe, are the highlanders affected to British government, as well as to its attire, that a *sans-culotte* in every sense, and nonsense of the word, will soon be a curiosity in the highlands. When a highlander begins to throw off any article of his national dress, it is a pretty good pledge for his parting with the whole, as soon as he can with convenience equip himself in the English way; for almost every mixture of the two dresses is so heterogeneous, and has so much the appearance and effect of masquerade, that I am convinced, he feels something ridiculous in the air, which it gives him; and no man loves to be long ridiculous.

BEFORE

BEFORE we fet out from Dalmalie, I took an opportunity of waiting upon Dr. Mac Intire, the amiable and learned minister of Glenorchay, with a view to making some enquiries on the subject of Ossian's Poems. The very obliging manner, in which he and his family received me at the manse, was one of those agreeable incidents on my tour, which will long keep its impress on my memory. The doctor and one of his neighbours, who had sometime ago given particular attention to this matter, both imparted to me several things highly worthy of notice, and such as will enable me advantageously to pursue this enquiry during my continuance in the highlands, and in other parts of Scotland, where I may expect information. I shall preserve my minutes, collected on this subject in different quarters, and hope they may sometime furnish matter for an essay, or dissertation upon the authenticity of these poems, which may bring this question nearer to absolute decision, than it has perhaps hitherto appeared.

AT present, you will, I doubt not, be better gratified with some miscellaneous observations.

servations, concerning the parish of Glenorchay, and its neighbourhood, communicated to me by its worthy minister.

The mountain of Cruachan, of which I have before spoken, is the weather-gage of the people, within view of its summit. Before a storm, "the spirit of the mountain shrieks," whilst its head and sides are enveloped with thick, and dusky clouds. Here, says the doctor, the eagle holds her aery, unmolested, and the fox issues warily from his retreat, to prowling about, for his nightly aery. Till lately, the Cruachan, and its environs, were the favourite haunt of the roebuck, and the mountain-deer. But now, said he, not unpleasantly affecting the stile of the old bards, of whom we had been talking, the hunter, with his sounding horn, and fleet dogs, roams no longer on the hill of the chase; the sheep browse undisturbed, on the heath of the forest, and the sons of the mountain have deserted the inheritance of their race for ages, to revisit its springs, and glades, and secret haunts no more. He mentioned that, some years ago, a very large
and

and aged hart, possibly overcome with hunger, and long pursuit, and almost bowed down with years, leisurely, and at mid-day, crossed the vale, near the inn, at Dalmalie, and the parish church. The poor beast kept the common path-way, near several houses, and, by such as revered his dignified form, his age, and seeming confidence in man, he was allowed to pass on in security. At last, pursued by women, boys and shepherd-dogs, he took shelter in a thicket, on the banks of a small rivulet, and there, this old, and venerable stranger ended his days, by the hands of the feeble! With regard to the eagle, he observed, that though this bird is still very destructive to kids and lambs, it has either lost much of its former ferocity and strength, or the many traditions in this country, concerning its daring assaults, are exaggerated, or unfounded. There is a tradition, current in the Isle of Man, that a male infant, found in the nest of an eagle, was brought to the proprietor of the island; and, that, having no children of his own, he adopted the child, and, at his demise, left him his possessions. This foundling is said, on the same authority,

rity, to have commenced the long ancestry of the Derby family. In the genealogical history, however, of that noble race, continued he, there is no mention of this pedigree. The eagle and child, on some of the coins of Mann, may have given rise to the story. May it not be supposed, that, to the memory of this, or some similar event, that favourite subject of Inn-signs, the eagle and child, so common in all the northern parts of Britain, is indebted for its origin?

THE wolf, in former days, was often found in the woods and wilds of the highlands. About the year 1684, the last wolf in Britain is said to have been killed by Sir Ewen Cameron, of Lochiel, a very memorable warrior of his time, and chieftain of a potent clan in the highlands.

THE mention of clans led Dr. Mac Intire to give some account of that of Mac Gregor, the chieftain of a numerous and powerful tribe, who had his residence and freehold property in Glenorchay. On an eminence opposite to the parish church, still called "the Gallow

Gallow Hill," were executed all criminals doomed to death in his courts of justice. The sun, in the course of a day, often beheld the culprit at large, apprehended, arraigned, adjudged and brought to execution. In other criminal courts of these times such procedure was not uncommon. A singular act however of Mac Gregor's justice is still on traditional record. One of his own relatives, who intentionally put out the eye of a stranger, who had but one, was condemned by Mac Gregor to loose both his own in retaliation of his malice. For the enormities of some individuals of the clan, during the minority of King James VI. the whole was indiscriminately proscribed, first by an act of council, and afterwards by an act of parliament, as lawless limmers, or villains: Even the name of Gregor was to be for ever abolished, and, at baptism, no clergyman was to give it under the penalty of banishment and deprivation. Happily those times are no more! the innocent are not now involved in the infamy and punishment of the guilty. This act so intemperate and severe, has been lately repealed by

a more enlightened legislature; and the tribe of Mac Gregors restored to their name, and, in possession of every other franchise of citizens, are as civilized, loyal, and peaceable, and as much distinguished for every virtue, as any of their fellow-subjects in the kingdom.

AT the east end of Loch-Aw on a rocky point, projecting into the lake, about a mile below the inn of Dalmalie, we saw the fine ruins of Castle Kilchurn. The square tower, of castellar form, was built in the year 1440, by Sir Colin Cambell; a knight of Rhodes, ancestor of the Breadalbane family. Sir Colin was a son of Argyll: His father gave him Glenorchay with other valuable appanages for his patrimony. He was a man of high renown for military prowess, and for the virtues of social and domestic life. His consort was a daughter of the earl of Angus, and she brought 600 merks* as her marriage dower. As her father was dead at the time of concluding this alliance, two noble relatives of Angus gave their bond for the payment of

* L. 33: d. 8

this splendid “tocher *”—Succesfive additions were afterwards made to Castle Kilchurn.

THE church of Glenorchay appears, outwardly, a decent building; but within, it is neither commodious, nor comfortable. Its central situation is, however, convenient for the people. “It is to be regretted,” said its worthy pastor, whilst our attention was turned upon this object, “that places, appropriated to the public worship of the God of Heaven, should not, every where, be rendered suitable to a service so sacred, and important. The magnificent temples of the heathen world indicated a becoming reverence for the objects of their worship. The Catholics throughout Europe, the Protestants of England, the reformed congregations abroad, and even the separatists from our

* I have somewhere read that, when the company of wax-chandlers, in London, dined in gala, at their hall, on the lord mayor’s day, about 1478, probably some years later than this marriage, (and money, in England may, in those days, have been much more plentiful, than in the highlands of Scotland,) that the luxury, and extravagance of the age was wondered at, as soon as it was known, that the expence of the day amounted to the enormous sum of seven shillings.

own establishment, are careful to have such places, as are consecrated to the immediate service of the parent of human kind, made not only decent and comfortable, but generally ornamental to the towns and villages to which they belong; whilst, with us, in North Britain, many of our country churches are such dark, damp, and dirty hovels, as chill and repress every sentiment of devotion. They endanger, besides, the health of every class of worshippers, and encourage the indifferent, and the indolent, in their neglect of institutions, with the stated observance of which, moral obligation itself, the public and private happiness of man are so much, and so intimately connected. To the honour, however, of all orders of people in this country, it may be said with justice, that, no where, are the ordinances of religion better attended. Persons of the first rank in society, and of the most cultivated understanding, affect not here, to desert the public offices of devotion. Cold, and cruel infidelity, has not yet, among us, reared her baneful head. Here, the rich and poor meet together in the house of God!

How

How respectable was the primitive zeal, and ardour of this observation ! How far the good doctor meant to extend this remark, under the idea of " this country," I cannot ascertain. But I am inclined to believe, he did not confine it within narrower limits, than the Highlands ; because, from my own observation and enquiry, I can add, that he would have been justified, in carrying it much farther. Concerning his own particular congregation, I learned, from different quarters, that they have the strongest regard, and attachment to the person of their minister ; and whoever knows him, would wonder, if it were otherwise. It is possible, that this circumstance attracts to his particular church, uncomfortable, and incommodious as it is, a people more zealous of good works, than may be very common, even in the highlands. You will infer, from this account, that, that peculiar imbecility and idiotism of modern times, the fancy of philosophizing the multitude, the popular mass of mankind, or, in other words, that of removing the best support of morality, and of all human law, the awful sanctions of religion, has

not yet penetrated the remoter regions of North Britain.

BEFORE I quit the Manse of Glenorchay, I must mention an anecdote, connected with its church, which I had from Dr. Mac Intire.

At the revolution, when Presbytery was established by act of parliament in Scotland, Mr. Dugald Lindsay was the episcopal minister of Glenorchay. He had succeeded his father, and both were deservedly respected and beloved by the people. Mr. Lindsay would not conform. Lord Breadalbane, the noble proprietor of the country, was, with reluctance, forced to write a letter of invitation to a Presbyterian licentiate, in the shire of Perth, to be minister of Glenorchay. He accepted the offer, and came, on the close of the week, to the parish; but, contrary as the circumstance was to their known character of hospitality, and of reverence for the clergy, he could find no house to receive him, or a person to make him welcome. In his distress, he was driven to the house of the man, whom he came to supplant, and was received with a
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hospitality and kindness, becoming a minister of the gospel of peace. Over the whole parish there was a strong ferment. The old and young, from all quarters, assembled on the sabbath, in the church-yard, long before the usual hour of worship. At the appearance of the stranger, accompanied by their own pastor, there was a general murmur of indignation. Twelve armed men, with drawn swords, surrounded the astonished intruder. Two bagpipes sounded the march of death. Unmoved by the tears and remonstrances of Mr. Lindsay, they proceeded with their prisoner, to the boundary of the parish, and of the country. There, he solemnly, on his bended knees, engaged never more to enter the parish, or attempt to give trouble to any person concerned in the occurrences of the day. He departed in peace, and kept his promise. The synod of Argyle were much incensed. Time cooled their ardour; the proprietor of the parish was indulgent; the minister deserving, and endeared to the parish. Mr. Lindsay continued in the undisturbed possession of his benefice, till the year of his death, 1729.

AFTER this agreeable visit to the worthy, though not immediate successor, of Mr. Dugald Lindsay, I returned to Dalmalie, and we set off for Tyndrum; our road winding pleasantly with the river, through the vale of Glenorchay.

As accommodations for the night, were not to be met with, at any practicable distance beyond Tyndrum, which is only twelve miles from our former resting place, a long afternoon here, has given us opportunity of contemplating, at leisure, the few objects of curiosity, which this situation presents. Among these, we admire the Bendoran, and the Dochart; the Benevise, and Benmuir, fronting each other, on the opposite sides of the plain, and greatly overtopping all the neighbouring eminences. These mountains are reckoned the highest ground in the whole region of the highlands, and they pour their waters, from their different sides, into the eastern, and western seas. One of the mountains nearest Tyndrum, contains a lead-mine, which has been extremely productive: the access to which, shews an aperture of striking

striking effect in the bosom of the mountain. The lease of a company, who had, for some years, worked this mine, being expired, and no new one yet taken, its entrance is closely shut up, and would not allow us to pry into the mysteries of its penetralia.

WHEN we returned to our inn, after a walk in the dusk of the evening, a dark blue vapour had shrouded the whole body of Ben-muir. This vapour being every where equally diffused, and dimly transparent, the gigantic mass was apparently magnified, its contour extended beyond its vast natural dimensions, and the whole, darkly visible, offered to our view an object of singular sublimity.

———— Like Teneriffe, or Atlas unremoved,
His stature reached the sky*:

It will not excite your wonder, that these mountains, of such imposing magnitude, and most of them of savage aspect, in a wild country, thinly peopled, should have inspired the inhabitants with some superstitions about

* Milton.

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them.

them. A hollow sound, which, sometimes, issues from their cavities, previously to a storm, and which is reckoned to presage its approach, they attribute to some spiritual power, which dwells invisibly among them. To this it was, that Dr. Mac Intire alluded, in his account of the Cruachan, when he observed in Ossian's language, that "the spirit of the mountain shrieks."

As I have not, hitherto, described a Highland cottage, those, which we saw in, or about the village of Tyndrum, may serve, nearly as a sample of the generality of them*.

UPON stones and pebbles mingled together, and reared, outwardly, without cement or plaister, into four rough walls, about five feet and a half high, some rude unhewn poles, often about the same height, are placed parallel to each other, and reach, angularly,

* As these cottages are a little superior to some we saw in Lochaber, Glendomore, &c. this description has been in an article or two, somewhat lowered since first written, to make it more justly representative of this object, as it generally presented itself throughout our whole tour of the Highlands.

one transverse beam, or rafter, at the ridge. A few light pieces, upright, or horizontal, are nailed at the sides. A quantity of oat straw, not very artificially laid upon split sticks, nailed over these poles, constitutes the roof. This thatch is secured against the wind, by heath or hay bands staked upon it, and running all over it in small squares. A couple of holes, about a foot square, are left in the walls for windows, and another for the door-way; the former, near Tyndrum, commonly occupied by a glazed casement, of four panes, or a large one single, and oftener, elsewhere, by nothing but a wooden shutter, kept open in the day, and closed at night. The door, seldom above five feet high, is generally here of board; but I have often seen a kind of willow, or osier-hurdle, pretty closely wattled, serve for the same purpose. When the smoke is allowed any other issue than at the door, or windows, four stout sticks set upright, and square, with a few others, running transversely, to frame them, the whole bound round with heath-bands, and plaistered with mortar on the inside, form the chimney. But as these chimneys are
seldom

seldom so constructed as to exclude the rain, a serious inconvenience in a wet climate, these apertures, in the roof, are often dispensed with, to avoid it. The floor is the bare earth, sometimes made even, and tolerably smooth, but oftener left rough. Where the inside of the walls are not plaistered with mortar, the peat, or turf, is so piled up round the room, in double, triple, and quadruple rows, as to serve, till its consumption, as fuel, reaches the wall, for the wainscot of the house. A second story is scarcely ever thought of, in these cottages: they are generally divided into two small rooms on each side of the door. Although the cottages, in the south-west part of the Highlands, have commonly a thatch of oat straw, and, in summer, a flourishing crop of oats, they are more northwardly covered, on the roof, with fods of earth laid, partly one over the other, in the manner of tiles. These, indeed, frequently cover the cottage from the top to the bottom, and when this covering is entirely green with grass, an assemblage of these huts, forming a village or hamlet, have, to the eye of a stranger, a singular, but not a disagreeable effect.

But

But I am sorry to say, there is nothing within to compensate for this pitiful exterior; and that nothing can be more scanty, mean and squalid, than their furniture and house-hold utensils. Two or three boards, as often unshaven, as otherwise, slightly tacked together, are a table. If we find three or four wooden stools, and a crazy old chair, for the elder part of the family, the rest are glad to seat themselves upon a heap of turf, if not upon the floor. A single kettle, and, perhaps, a saucepan, a few coarse platters, wooden dishes and spoons, a bedstead, or two, with wretched flock, or straw mattrasses, and a few coarse rugs to cover them, make up the remainder of the inventory. I have not been describing some one single cottage, to which the misery or despair of its inhabitant might have led me, through commiseration on his behalf: This is a picture of all, within and without, which my mortified curiosity induced me to examine; and, more particularly on the route from Tyndrum to Inverness, comprehending nearly 120 miles. From the exterior, however, which I saw of many hundred cottages, bearing the greatest resemblance to those, which

which I entered, as well as from the result of enquiry, I cannot help concluding, that, except the houses of the nobility, those of the gentry, clergy, sheep-farmers, and inn-keepers, scattered here and there, I have described nineteen out of twenty, not of all the pig-sties, but the dwellings of the peasantry in the northern Highlands.

ALTHOUGH their lodging has so little to recommend it, and cannot have undergone much improvement, since the first peopling of this country, the introduction of potatoes, which, I believe, have been cultivated in the Highlands for these fifteen or twenty years, has certainly mended their food, and augmented its quantity. The cottage fare, till a late period, was generally confined to oatmeal, made into cakes with water; if not, sometimes, eaten raw. The few, who can now and then procure a little milk, to mix with their potatoes, will probably be thought, by their neighbours, to fare sumptuously on those days.

If

IF you think, that I have dwelt too long upon the subject of these huts, do not forget, that they are each to its tenant, as far as the wants of nature go, what the Louvre, or Versailles has been to a race of mighty monarchs; that a Scottish Highlander has the same passions, the same consciousness of his own happiness and misery, and may have as much feeling of satisfaction or discontent in any natural circumstance of his condition, as the greatest potentate. You will allow then, perhaps, that the palace and the hut, stand upon an equal foot of importance to their respective occupants; but doubt, whether the latter can equally merit the attention of indifferent persons. Why not; in contemplating either, only as an object of satisfaction, or comfort to a human being? If, putting all imaginary, or artificial wants out of the question, we see the Highland cottage answering the necessary purposes of a house; warmth and protection; why is it not so far as worthy of consideration as a palace? With respect to the feelings of their different owners, the advantage of habit is equal in both cases, and it is that of giving some sort of
value

value to every thing in man's possession. It is hard to say then, as far as nature or habit are concerned in the question, whether the inmate of the palace, or of the cottage, owes most to his habitation. As to imaginary and artificial wants, they are so numerous, so importunate, and insatiable, that nothing is more certain, than that they never are, nor can be completely satisfied; so that considering the occupant of the palace as continually liable to all these, and the tenant of the hut to almost none, the latter is, probably, happier, as the possessor of a hut, than the former, as the tenant of a palace.

THIS reasoning will probably hold, in regard to all the natural wants, passions, and propensities, of human life; so that the man, whose wishes are wholly confined to their gratification, will, probably, in a given term of existence, have more to set down to the total amount of his happiness, than he, who has the wants of art and imagination, more-over to supply.

THOUGH

THOUGH I fear it cannot be affirmed, that the poor highlander is able, at all moments, to procure himself the natural gratifications, or even the necessaries of life, I know not, whether there be not still reason to believe his condition, on the whole, the happier of the two. Disappointment of an imaginary good is, frequently, as deeply felt, as that of a real one. Sometimes, much more deeply! Is the questioning of a man's honour, when he cannot tell, in what it consists, a real evil? Is not the disturbance of an idle prejudice, or of an unfounded opinion, an imaginary one? And yet, we see, he will risk his life, to revenge either one, or the other: The most real and pressing evils are more patiently borne by the man, who knows no other. The starving beggar crawls from his hut to the miser's door, to beg a morsel of bread, to relieve the hunger of a necessitous moment. This, I fear, has been, sometimes, refused. Can a more real evil, a severer disappointment, be easily conceived? And yet this wretch lifts no hand of violence against his cruel, and insulting fellow-creature. It has happened, too, that he has even preferred death to robbery,

bery, if there be robbery in a case of such extreme necessity*. If these things be so, we have reason to conclude, imaginary evils more deeply, and keenly felt, than real ones, and that they may become the more intolerable of the two. How is it else to be accounted for, that so many grow weary of life, who lead it beneath palaces and gilded roofs, and terminate their existence by suicide; whilst among the humblest cottagers, a class so infinitely more numerous, this strongest proof of extreme wretchedness is rarely heard of? If among persons, originally of this class, a few instances of suicide may have occurred, the individuals guilty of it, have generally been found such, as have been transplanted from their native sphere and occupations into higher scenes, in the service of the rich and the great. They have there imbibed false and unnatural notions of happiness, and striving, without due power, or means to realize them,

* Should some man of steel, hard enough, possibly, to have been guilty of the horrid refusal, in the case above-mentioned, read the conclusion of this period, he will quarrel with my doubt.—Let him!—I will risk it with every good man upon the face of the earth.

have

have been plunged into irretrievable difficulties, and fallen, at length, on the last horrible resource of despair.

What seems the fair conclusion from the foregoing reflections, but that the unpromising exterior of a Highland cottage, and even its internal circumstances, are no subject of contempt, nor, generally, even of pity; whilst those of the palace, cannot reasonably excite either envy, or desire? Who, have I sometimes said to myself, when riding through a village, or hamlet, composed of these humblest dwellings of our species, who can look upon them, without a sense, even of respect; if he consider, that each is inhabited by the sons and daughters of the same good Providence, that protects the prosperous, and the noble; that all beneath them, are acting under the common sensations, appetites, and passions of our nature; that they possess the same natural understanding, form and beauty; live under the same close and sacred relations of husband and wife; father and mother; son and daughter; sister and brother

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with those of higher condition, and communicate in all the delightful charities attendant upon each ; expressed with more grace, perhaps, in polished scenes of life, but no where, with truer feeling, or warmer cordiality !



LETTER

LETTER XVII.

Beilichelish, Sept. 8, 1798.

WE quitted Tyndrum yesterday morning, in bad weather, after a hasty breakfast, in hopes of reaching Fort-William at night.

AFTER keeping, what is called, in this country, a level road, for a mile or two, we began to mount the braes* of Glenorchay. Passing the Bendoran, a very high mountain on our right, and many others, successively, on either hand, we found ourselves on the borders of Loch-Tullah, which we coasted in the rain, for some time; but, under the partial protection of a wood of firs, upon an eminence near the water. Three hours laborious jumbling, over a very rough, and stoney road, brought us dripping to a little public-house at Inavoran. Our horses demanded both food and respite; and the necessity, which we ourselves knew we should

* The hill-country.

be under, of dining late, disposed us to wish some little refreshment: we were, moreover, very desirous of drying our clothes. Circumstances, however, proved unfavourable to all these comforts. The landlord had been ill, a fortnight, of a fever, which, from several accounts, we had some reason to believe contagious. We ventured, nevertheless, to trust our great coats near a fire, in a little room next to his; whilst we ate oat-cake, and drank whiskey in the stable; the only fare to be had, and not much to our taste.

You would not think this a very promising scene for a discussion on the poems of Ossian; but such it turned out. An old farmer, from the Monedoch, or black mountain, in this neighbourhood, was feeding his horse near our own. He talked English fluently enough; and, as I found him intelligent, I made some enquiry upon this favourite subject, and obtained some degree of satisfaction. His information, which single, I might have set down but as a cypher in this account, acquired much higher value, by its place after an efficient figure, to which my information

in

in the former letter, had amounted. I hope to give you the result on a future occasion.

HALF dry, and somewhat refreshed, but better pleased with our intellectual, than our bodily fare, we resumed our journey, and soon began to mount, though with much difficulty, the rugged acclivities of the Mone-doch. The charms of the Gaelic muse, now somewhat associated with its rude scenery, furnished, perhaps, some matter of relief to our spirits; sufficiently tried, however, by a continued, and painful ascent of seven miles, which, for the sake of our horses, we made chiefly on foot. Having attained the summit, we had to encounter the vexation of frequent driving showers, without a house, a tree, or any other object, either to shelter, or to amuse us. And, even in the intervals, betwixt showers, we had nothing to contemplate, but an immense vacuity spread out before us, in the barren, and dreary plain of Rannoch; unless numberless misshapen blocks of stone, rising hideously above the surface of the earth, could be said to contradict the inanity of our prospects.

OVER these desolate wilds, it was, that the royal fugitive, after his abortive expedition of 1745, wandered about in despair; occasionally concealing himself from pursuit, among the rocks, and in dens, and caves of the earth, exposed to hunger and want, and all the rigours of an inhospitable climate.

FAR on the north-west of these plains, lies the Loch-Ericht, stretched out to a great distance, whose waters descend into another lake, which bears the name of the plain. On the western banks of the latter, stand the military barracks of George-Town. At a small interval from it, eastward, rises Mount Alexander, formerly the residence of the poet Robertson, of Struan*, who celebrated a fountain at its foot, which he calls Argentine. Its southern shore is shaded by an ancient forest of pine and birch. But the whole lake, and all these objects about it, you

* This country, says Mr. Pennant, speaking of Rannoch, was once the property of this poet, and granted to an ancestor of his, as a reward for having taken Graham, the ruffian, who had murdered James I. of Scotland. It was valued at 100 marks.

must suppose me to have commanded by second sight; for, from our station on the black mountain, they were far beyond the ken of the natural eye.

WE had now to descend three miles of most execrable road, walking, as when we had mounted it. It was not only interrupted at every step, by loose stones; but, in many places, the natural rock lay so unevenly beneath them, as to endanger the overturning of our vehicle; prevented, indeed, only by our servant hanging upon it with all his weight, on the tilted side. Every now and then, where the ground became more level, for a few yards, we had some standing water, or torrent to cross. We passed along, however, as well as we could, though in frequent doubt, whether we must not return, and in continual jeopardy for our wheels, and our horses. Had the latter tumbled down the slippery steeps of the rocks, we ourselves must have been crushed beneath their fall, as we were obliged to lead them, and to guide every step they took, with the most cautious circumspection. Where it happened, now

and then, to be practicable on some even ledge of rock, to stay our footsteps, and to keep our carriage tolerably poised, we raised our eyes, to look for some compensation of our distress, in the scenery around us. But no one cheering object arose to sight. No human habitation; not a Highland hut; still nothing but rocky, dreary, dismal nakedness; one precipice after another, diversified alone by melancholy stacks of peat, upon patches of black moss, thinly scattered betwixt the different hills; or by numberless roots of trees, fantastically wreathed among the heath, or discovered above the broken earth; presenting a comfortless idea of antient forests burnt to the ground, to make passage for a military road, and the march of armies, in times of rebellion and civil war. Hungry, wet, and fatigued, we got, at last, after various windings down one continued descent, to the bottom of our mountain, and arrived at an inn, called the King's House. This house is a lonely station, on that military road, over which we had been so agreeably travelling, and leads to Fort-William, and the two other

other Highland citadels, toward which, we were tending.

As most travellers, the drovers excepted from Caithness, Sutherland, and Ross-shire, are discouraged from taking this route, very dainty entertainment was not to be expected. And we found nothing, indeed, but the coarsest and most ill-drest fare, in a very dirty room, and that under the apprehension of catching a malignant fever, for which our landlord's son had kept his bed some days, in great danger, and remote from medical assistance. Whilst our repast was preparing, as the rain had now ceased, jaded as we were, we gladly made our escape from the house, and walked with Mac Allum, our host, a sensible and obliging man, to survey the environs of his situation, and to ask a few questions concerning them.

MORE desolate prospects than those, which presented themselves, every way, round our inn, are not easy to be imagined. They exhibit, however, not the mere negation of beauty, but the most positive, and even curious

rious ugliness. One of the mountains behind Mac Allum's house, suggests the idea of its having been flead; as if its natural covering had been, all at once, stripped off by some outrageous storm. Had we seen nothing but rocks, rising boldly from it on all sides, it had been a sublime skeleton: it appeared, now, more the carcase of a mountain peeled, fore and hideously disgusting. That which we had been descending, in our way hither, formed the front view of Mac Allum's solitary dwelling, and you are already acquainted with it. Others to the right and left, brown, grey, and black, formed, apparently, by volcanic lava, and afterwards shattered by earthquakes, were fit companions for those before-described. The very names of some of them, all Gaelic, which our host kindly wrote down on my tablet, were, as he pronounced them, sounds not inexpressive of the dismal and the horrid. The Creawe, for instance, the Buchaileawe, and the Bene-cheatline.

THERE must have been a few fields of half-starved verdure somewhere about the feet

feet of these mountains, and probably in the narrow passes betwixt them, withdrawn from our sight; for Mac Allum mentioned his sheep and his goats; but all the verdure that appeared, if any there were, was so overbalanced by the savage nakedness of the more promising parts of the scene, that I find no impression of any thing else on my memory.

You will be desirous of knowing what inhabits here besides Mac Allum: I saw no human dwelling but his own, in all the melancholy extent of the vale. He, I believe, is undisputed lord over all the moles, weasels, white rats, martins, wild-cats, foxes, otters, badgers, pole-cats, hares, white and brown, the red-deer, and the mountain-roë, which frequent his wild neighbourhood. The winged inhabitants of his domain, are the hawk, from its smallest species to the falcon, or hunting hawk, heath-fowl and grouse, ptarmigans, eagles, &c. A sort of jack-daw, with a red-bill, and legs of the same colour, though not mentioned by Mac Allum, among the birds, immediately in his environs, are, I am well assured, sometimes, found hatch-
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ing in the rocks of this region of the Highlands, about Lismore and Appin. This country, he informed us, is often shut up from all human intercourse, by deep snows, for many weeks, and, in severer winters, for several months together: and at such intervals, in winter, as there happens neither snow nor frost, the Creawe and Buchaileawe are hid, for many days, successively, in vapour, impenetrable till the winds begin to howl among their steeps, and storms of rain succeed, which pour down their sides in a thousand cataracts, and deluge the vales below.

FROM these circumstances, whether constant or accidental, of Mac Allum's situation, an effeminate Sybarite would, probably, conclude, that he must needs be a doleful wight, acquainted with nothing but meagerness and misery. From his countenance, however, the strong firm tone of his voice, and the hearty cheerfulness of his conversation, notwithstanding the concern, which, at times, he expressed, and undoubtedly felt, for his son, I am strongly inclined to believe, that he enjoys as much happiness as commonly falls
to

to the lot of man. He occupies a farm of some extent ; and though delicacy, or even cleanliness seemed but little regarded in his house, there was an appearance of something substantial in his establishment, which to a mind unused to artificial necessities, may, perhaps, supply the most essential comforts of life. The solitude of his situation, and frequent necessity of confinement within doors, from the rigour of the climate, often dispose him to reading, for his amusement. He appeared a man of reflection, and, though inquisitive, was well enough informed, to repay the gratification of his own curiosity, by what he was able, in his turn, to impart. If in a lowering day a bag-piper, or blind fidler chances to drop in, his whole family, children, men and maidens, and the stranger within his doors, as certainly start up in a reel or country jig, and foot it much more merrily, though with rather less ceremony than the graces at a court-ball. We frequently witnessed these occasional fits of merriment in the Highland inns. They are found to give a fresh spring to the nerves, a new flow of

of animal spirits, and good humour to a whole family, till the next piper or blind fidler sets them all in motion again; if the interval be not too long. I was not displeased to hear my landlord assure us, that his fire-side, on a long winter's evening, is often cheered by the antient clan-songs; and that, he believed, he had frequently heard, from the benighted traveller, strains of their elder bards, and thinks he had heard some of them attributed to Ossian. The names of Fingal, Cuchullin and others of Ossian's heroes were familiar to him. He had heard of the publications of Mr. Macpherson; but had not seen them.

THE King's House, we understood, stands nearly on the confines of the parishes of Lismore, and Appin, which stretch out many a mile westward from it. Within their extensive circuit, is Loch-Ete, or Eta, an estuary, or arm of the sea, on the banks of which, Unroth, and his three sons, Nathos, Althos, and Ardan, nephews of the celebrated Cuchullin, were born. Their traditionary story, as related in the poem of Dar-thula, is still current

current among these mountains; a circumstance which, perhaps, our host might have confirmed, had I fortunately known it, when I was with him.

WHEN I looked round me, on returning to the inn, and was thinking what might be the situation of one of Mac Allum's benighted travellers, I amused myself with imagining, with what appropriate effect he might sing, at the fire-side of the King's House, certain passages from the poem of the five bards, cited by Macpherson, in a note to the Croma.

“DARK, panting, sad, the traveller has lost his way. Through shrubs, through thorns, he goes along the gurgling rill. He fears the rock, and the fen: He fears the ghost of night. The old tree groans to the blast; the falling branch resounds*. The wind drives the withered burs together, along the grass.

* How many years ago it may be, since this allusion to wood may have been applicable in this quarter, I do not know; but the reader will recollect, the roots which I mentioned, as still remaining of antient forests about this country. It was not thought worth while to leave this passage out of the quotation.

Is it the light tread of the ghost? He trembles amidst the night. Dark, dusky, howling is the night, cloudy, and full of ghosts! The dead are abroad! my friends, receive me from the night."

WE had now once more crossed Mac Al-lum's threshold: We caught a hasty meal, without the merit of any temptation to prolong it, and proceeded on our day's journey; which, not to mention some peril from contagion, had been thus far made, under the united circumstances of the most unpleasant weather, the worst roads, the dreariest country, and the forriest accommodations, which we had met with since our setting out from home.

AFTER we had gone a few miles, we overtook, on horseback, an ingenuous looking young man, in a Highland dress; a person apparently of better order. As I had quitted the carriage, and was riding near him, he asked me some indifferent questions, and we entered into conversation. I found,
 that

that he belonged to the village of Bellichelish, near the Ferry-house, where we proposed to sleep; convinced, that it was now impracticable to reach Fort-William. In the midst of our discourse, we turned suddenly into the famous valley of Glenco, which presented on our left, and those standing almost in an even series, and perpendicularly, the terminations, or (will you rather allow me to call them?) the gable ends of five enormous mountains, overbrowing with a gloom, most dreadfully solemn, a roaring torrent, at their base. I was, for some moments, held in silent astonishment, at the bold, and surprising effect of these monstrous masses, in the proud and singular array, in which they stand. The glen, of which they form one side, is narrow, and two or three miles long; but I had passed one half of it, before I found leisure to observe, that the elevated screen on our right, beneath which we were riding, was nearly one continued green hill, of mild aspect, affording excellent pasturage, accessible to shepherds, and their flocks, and as opposite in character, as in situation, to the stern and menacing forms on the left, which

defied all approach. The striking contrast of features, between the opposite sides of the glen, might be whimsically considered as emblematic of the two parties, at the instant preceding the horrible massacre, committed in this glen, in the third year of William III. which my Highland companion was describing to me in strong colours, as we rode along the valley. Can greater opposition be conceived than that between the brutal ferocity of the assailants, in the moment previous to the execution of this massacre, and the careless and unsuspecting friendship of the inhabitants of Glen-co, at the end of a fortnight's hospitality, which they had exercised toward these banditti, who had come at first, with full purpose to murder them; but it was under "the pretence, says Smollett, of levying the arrears of the land-tax, and hearth-money. When Macdonald, continues the historian, demanded, whether they came as friends, or enemies, he (Captain Campbell) answered, as friends; and promised, upon his honour, that neither he, nor his people, should sustain the least injury. In consequence of this declaration, he, and his men, were received with the most cordial hos-

hospitality, and lived fifteen days with the men of the valley, in all the appearance of the most unreserved friendship. At length, the fatal period approached. Macdonald and Campbell having passed the day together*, parted about seven in the evening, with mutual promises of the warmest affection. The younger Macdonald, perceiving the guards doubled, began to suspect some treachery, and communicated his suspicion to his brother, but neither he, nor his father, would harbour the least doubt of Campbell's sincerity: Nevertheless, the two young men went forth privately, to make further observations. They overheard the common soldiers say, "they liked not the work; that, though they would have willingly fought the Macdonalds of the glen, fairly in the field, they held it base, to murder them in cold blood; *but that their officers were answerable for the treachery.*" When the youths hastened back to apprise their father of the impending danger; they saw the house already surrounded; they heard

* The officers, it is said, had been engaged in a party at cards that very evening, with the Captain, and Mrs. Macdonald,

the discharge of muskets, and being destitute of arms secured their own lives by immediate flight. The savage ministers of vengeance had entered the old man's chamber, and shot him through the head. He fell down dead in the arms of his wife, who died next day, distracted at the horror of her husband's fate. The laird of Auchintrinchen* Macdonald's guest, who had, three months before, submitted to the government†, and had, at this very time, a protection in his pocket, was put to death without question. A boy, of eight years, who fell at Campbell's feet, imploring mercy, and offering to serve him for life, was stabbed to the heart by one

* Achtrichatain, as spelt in the country itself.

† Macdonald himself, had done the same, and taken the requisite oaths, the very day after the term of grace. Not having meant, however, to transgress the time, he went, the preceding day, Dec. 1, 1690, to Fort-William. Colonel Hill, the governor of the fort, not being a magistrate, refused to tender him the oath. He immediately set out to Inveraray, which, as the earth was then covered with snow, and the road, probably, not better than at present, he reached it with great difficulty. Sir Colin Campbell, the sheriff of the county, in consideration of his disappointment at Fort-William, was prevailed upon to administer the oaths to him, and his adherents. See Smollett, in the reign of William III.

Drum-

Drummond, a subaltern officer. Eight and thirty persons suffered in this manner; the greatest part of whom, were surpris'd in their beds, and hurried into eternity, before they had time to implore the divine mercy. The design was, to butcher all the males under seventy, that lived in the valley, the number of whom amounted to two hundred; but some of the detachments did not arrive soon enough to secure the passes; so that one hundred and sixty escaped. Campbell, having perpetrated this brutal massacre, ordered all the houses to be burned, made a prey of the cattle, and effects, that were found in the valley, and left the women and children, whose fathers and husbands he had murdered, naked and forlorn, without covering, food, or shelter in the midst of snow, that covered the whole face of the country, at the distance of six long miles from every inhabited place. Distracted with grief and horror, shivering with cold, and appalled with the apprehension of immediate death, from the swords of those, who had sacrificed their friends and kinsmen, they could not endure such a complication of calamities; but generally per-

rished in the waste, before they could receive the least comfort, or assistance."

ALTHOUGH my Glenco companion's account of this transaction agreed, as well as I can recollect, in all its material circumstances, with the historian's relation, I have preferred the latter, as it will be supposed more authentic ground for a remark, which, perhaps, you will not think quite unseasonable, at a time, when the fanaticism of philosophical liberty suggests, and practices too *, with much frequency, skill and satisfaction, not in the secret recesses of a wilderness, but in one of the most polished capitals in Europe; and, in the open face of day, the same cold-blooded, and execrable horrors, and all, stranger yet to tell! as the best expedient to establish a *free government*?

It is remarkable, that the intermediate actors in this black scene of Glenco, pretend, as is done in every case of the same sort, to be nothing more than mere machines, since, af-

* See Fennel's Review of Proceedings at Paris, and Dr. More's Letters from France, *passim*.

ter deliberately considering the nature of the business, they flattered themselves, *that their officers were to be answerable for the treachery of it.* The officers, on their part, to make the best supposition in their favour, not improbably considered themselves also, as reduced to machines, by the king's authority; and the king salved his conscience, by pretending, according to Smollett, that he had subscribed the ruthless order, amidst a heap of other papers, without knowing the purport of it.

As our nation has ever shewn a strong propensity to imitate the fashions of the French, and as it may, without levity, be observed, that the practice of massacre is become a very reigning fashion in that country, and seems, indeed, wonderfully to amuse that refined people, it may be of use to hint to the lovers of fashion, that a massacre, as it must, in its nature, be intentionally and deliberately undertaken, is whenever, or wherever perpetrated, the most real and decided, as well as the most barbarous, and horrid species of murder, that can possibly be committed. Each individual, through the whole se-

ries of persons, whether suggesting such a deed in the first instance, consenting to it, or immediately executing it, are every one positively murderers of the blackest dye; and there are no machines in the whole business, but the secretary's pen, the pistol, or the guillotine. This is a case, which justifies, and demands, as a duty, resistance to every order or decree, come it from what power on earth soever it may. When the cry of this bloody transaction reached the king's ear, he made no attempt to assert the sovereign's right, or state necessity, for murder; pleas for massacre, with peculiar consistency arrogated at present, by the professed philanthropy, and philosophic gentleness of democratic republicans, the idolaters of justice, freedom, and truth. No, King William's was a mistake, an oversight, it seems, committed in the hurry of subscribing his royal mandates. But is a mandate from the throne, of so little consequence, as to be signed without consideration; or even to be subscribed, among other papers, in haste? Can ignorance, or hurry, in such a case, admit of excuse? But, after all, must not the king's

king's assent to the deed in question, be supposed, previously to the writing of the order itself? Whether his majesty's conscience questioned him upon this most important circumstance; or, by what casuistry he might have undertaken to answer it, does not appear. But the imputation of guilt stuck fast to his character; and if posterity remember this deed, whilst it does not forget his services, I see not what injustice is done him.

BUT to return to my tour, we were approaching the catastrophe of our story, and at the same time, taking leave of the scene where it happened.—The evening was now coming on; and, beginning to envelop the five mountains with its dusky veil, gave the perspective of the glen, which I turned now and then to view, the grandest and most impressive gloom imaginable. The emotions excited by the tale just finished, mingled their effect, and added a tinge of horror to the majestic solemnity of the scene.

A narrow plain succeeded; and, at the farther end of a black looking village, opened
dimly

dimly upon us. My companion bad us adieu, as soon as we reached the village; and, at no great distance beyond, on the banks of the estuary of Loch-Leven, we presently arrived at Beilichelish Ferry.



LETTER

L E T T E R XVIII.

Fort-William, Sept. 9, 1792.

OUR inn last night, at the Ferry, and all its accommodations, kept those where we had stopped, on the former part of the day, perfectly in countenance:

————— *Servetur ad inum*
Qualis ab incæpto processerit, & sibi constet.*

It was, if possible, worse provided. After a dirty bed had been made up for me, it took, at least, half an hour, to find sacks, old blankets, and blocks of wood, to close a large fissure in the wall, at which, the wind and rain of a stormy night were entering freely, and copiously, at the foot of my uncurtained hammock. The inhabitants of the house, a hardy race, cared not about such trifles: They seemed to wonder at my scruples; but they did their best, to humour them. Much after all their doings, I cannot say, for the luxury

* Horace.

luxury of my repose. A blustering morning, after an uncomfortable night, and the alternative of being obliged to spend half the day, where we were, or to ferry immediately over the estuary, which was very rough, and half a quarter of a mile across, were not pleasant circumstances. The tide was ebbing apace, and there was no time for hesitation. We determined to proceed. The boat being too small for our horses to pass over at the same time with ourselves, we chose they should make the experiment first.

WHILST we were standing on the quay, anxious for their success, as we were not without some apprehension, that they might take fright from the rolling of the boat, betwixt the violence of wind and water; there came down, to join our ferrying party over the stream, a tall, melancholy and gentlemanly figure, completely dressed *a l'highlandoise*, and armed with dirk and pistol. Stepping composedly forwards, and observing our solicitude, very opportunely, to cheer our spirits, he related the incident of two English gentlemen having been drowned three years before,

before, in ferrying over this very water. The boat, however, arrived safe with its charge, to the opposite shore. The men returned immediately with it, for ourselves, and for the carriage; expressing the apprehensions which they had felt at the alarm, and movement of one of our horses, about the middle of their course. Our carriage being put into the boat, tilted it so much, that all who entered, could not restore it to any thing like a balance. The difficult passage of our horses, the story just told us by the melancholy gentleman, the boding gloom of his countenance, the wind and tide meeting each other, and causing great agitation in our vessel, a furious storm of rain and hail set in, after a few strokes of our oars, all combined to mark every face with visible signs of uneasiness; and, indeed, an enormous surge in the midst of the current, so nearly overset us, that our feelings, when at length we got safe to shore, were happily, and strongly contrasted to those, which we had experienced on the water.

WE landed in that part of the Highlands called Lochaber, celebrated in Scottish song.

We

We did not, however, sing “Lochaber no more,” for much were we rejoiced at setting foot upon its solid ground.

It was on this coast, July 7, 1745, that Charles Edward, son of the Chevalier St. George, landed, for the conquest of the British empire, with seven officers, and arms for two thousand men. Hands were found, however, for three fourths of them, in this quarter. The Highland chiefs, hastening to join his standard, brought him fifteen hundred men. You recollect how much the audacious spirit of this attempt surprised all Europe; how it excited the apprehensions of the pusillanimous in England, the pity of the wise, and the loyalty of the kingdom in general.

LOCHABER is a poor, but pleasant country, more cultivated, at present, for potatoes, than oats; though the latter are not wanting. Pretty large flocks of sheep, herds of goats, and some black cattle occupied the hanging steeps on our right. The estuary of Loch-Leven ran on the other hand of this agreeable valley.

valley. After we had travelled a few miles, the water branched out into two directions, partly opposite; one branch taking the south-westward by Morvern, through the wildest parts of the Highlands, into the sea, the other toward the north-east, into Inverness-shire, along which lay the military road to Fort William; the route which we were pursuing. Habitations are thinly scattered here: we now and then saw a shepherd's or a herdsman's cot. On the decayed parts of the road, at pretty frequent intervals, we met with peasants repairing, or improving them. Where the base of these mountains runs down precipitately into the water of Lochiel, or Loch-Yell, as some of the geographers call it, the road has been cut out of the solid rock, with infinite labour and expence, and made sufficiently wide for the safe passage of meeting carriages; but the greater part of this road, almost from our entrance into Lochaber quite to Fort William, and thence to Fort Augustus, and beyond that toward Inverness, though shaped out of the mountains consists of earth and large stones, rather than solid rock. To have made a road of such considerable length,
it

it being sixty-eight miles to Inverness from Beilichelish, had otherwise been impracticable. The undertaking, when you consider, that the level is almost wholly artificial, was a very arduous one. The first steps towards its execution were highly daring. The $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\varsigma\tau\tilde{\omega}$, which Archimides wanted for the removal of the whole earth, was here as much wanted for the removal of rocks and precipices, hanging directly over the water. And there was no proper access to them for the engineer and his men, but by descending from the ridges of several of the loftiest mountains in the Highlands, and down their most rapid declivities; sometimes, in the tracts of goats and sheep, and often where no footstep of man or beast had ever been set, by clinging to the roots of trees and shrubs, and sometimes hanging to one another in their dangerous descent. When they at last arrived near enough to the bottom to commence their operations, where the ground proved impenetrable to the mattock, pick-axe, or bar of iron, workmen, suspended by ropes among the precipices, were obliged to bore, or undermine the rocks, and then to blow up their solid masses by the
the

the application of gunpowder. Notwithstanding the immense labour, difficulty and danger to be encountered in the progress of this work, projected by General Wade, and carried on by his troops, and under his inspection, it was, after ten years, happily accomplished. An idea of this enterprize is well transmitted in the following inscription, which, as I understand from a former traveller, is engraven upon Tay Bridge, over which one branch of the military road takes its course, and near the seat of the earl of Breadalbane.

Mirare

Viam hanc militarem,

Ultra Romanos terminos

M. passuum CCL. hac illac

extensam;

Tesquis et paludibus insultantem,

Per montes rupesque patefactam,

Et indignanti Tavo,

Et cernis, instratam:

Opus hoc arduum, sua solertia,

Et decennali militum opera,

An. Ær. Xtianæ, 1733. Posuit G. Wade,

Copiarum in Scotia præfectus.

Ecce quantum valeant

Regis Georgii II. Auspicia!

GOVERNMENT, we understood, allows 8000*l.* a year for the repair of the military roads of Scotland ; a business which employs a considerable number of the peasantry during the summer season, and proves the surest source of their maintenance for the whole year.

THESE roads are liable to be much broken by the deluges of water, which descend with violence from the hills after rain; and the bridges which are erected at the bottom of every ravine, to let these occasional torrents pass beneath them, are frequently overthrown. This present summer having been unusually wet, we found many parts of the road, especially, where the masonry was out of repair, or unfinished, nearly impassable.

WE had not travelled many miles, before we suddenly perceived, at the side of the chaise, our “ knight of the sorrowful countenance,” who had recommenced his lonely walk, as soon as we had all quitted the ferry-boat ; not chusing to wait, as we did, till the storm, in which we arrived at Lochaber,

was

was blown over. During the time we had stopped, for this purpose, at the ferry-house, opposite to that of Beilichelish, we had learnt that Mr. Macdonald* had, for some time, been a solitary wanderer among the gloomy mountains of the Highlands. He appeared to be about three or four and thirty years of age, and had been, as we were told, in his early youth, violently enamoured of a young lady of great beauty and accomplishments, in whose near neighbourhood he had lived from his infancy. They had been play-fellows from their leading-strings: nothing could be more natural than their attachment: It was difficult to say, whether they became friends or lovers first: It matters not; their friendship and their love were mutual;

For on his vows the blameless Phœbe smiled,
And her alone he loved, and loved her from a child†.

Mr. Macdonald's father, an opulent merchant of G———k.—You see what is coming.—The bane of all true-love since the

* The name of this gentleman.

† Minstrel, Book I. 13.

last golden day of Arcadia, down to this age of-obdurate iron. No sooner does this celestial plant spring in the heart, and begin to display its bloom in the face of the sun, than the frost of parental avarice nips it in the bud, and blasts the flower.—Mr. Macdonald's father, I say, an opulent merchant of G—n—k, knowing, that the young lady's charms were all her fortune, and a very contemptible one too, in his estimation, whose vessels were every season sailing into port, richly freighted, with herring and whalebone, and who counted no man's, or woman's worth, but in pounds, opposed his son's desire with such persevering rigour, that, in a fit of despair, the young man ran away from home; and, undiscovered by all the researches of his family, enlisted himself as a private soldier; in hopes of diverting his thoughts by a new scene of life, and of gaining subsistence without obligation to an obdurate parent, who had condemned him to misery. After he had served some time, being, upon neglect of duty, into which his wayward passion had probably betrayed him, chastised by his officers, he resented the correction with so much petulance,

lance, and impropriety of language, that he was sentenced, by a court-martial, to corporal punishment. The delicate habits of his body, and a mind softened by love, had ill prepared him for such rough discipline. He suffered, indeed, so much under the smart and disgrace of it, that he came to a resolution of acquainting his father with the hardships of his situation. The old man, overjoyed at the thoughts of recovering his son, set out immediately to visit him, at the place where the regiment was quartered, and invited him to return to the bosom of his family, with every argument but one, which affection could have suggested. That one, alas! was no longer in his power to offer. The young Macdonald, giving him plain intimations, what motive, alone, could induce him to return home, drew from his father the unwelcome intelligence, that the mistress of his affections had lately been married to another, and was settled with him at her native place. As the father could not deny, that she had been forced into this connection against her inclinations, the young man became at first distracted and frantic at the in-

formation; and now resisted every attempt to persuade, or to compel his return home. Coming, after some days, to a more temperate state of mind, he sunk into a kind of calm despondency, from which, he has never totally recovered. The father finding his son's resolution unchangeable, set out, alone, on his journey homeward, oppressed with grief and disappointment: but not till he had consented to the young man's request of purchasing him, without delay, a lieutenancy in a regiment, then about to embark for America. Macdonald served on that continent, and in the West-Indies, at the end of the late war. His regiment being broken at the peace, he prevailed on his father to procure him a situation in the navy. He went on board the Sandwich man of war; but after some time, for reasons which I have not learnt, he quitted the sea-service. But all the changes of country and climate, all the variety of objects and incidents, occurring in his military and naval life, had not effaced the deep impression of disappointed love; and he still refused to return home. His father allows him 100*l.* per annum; a sum which
amply

amply suffices for the expences of that wandering life, to which a gloomy and disturbed imagination has devoted him.

AT the moment we overtook this respectable vagabond, he seemed the living image of Gray's melancholy man:

now smiling as in scorn
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies, would he rove,
Now drooping woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

AFTER having heard his story, it was impossible not to feel an interest for him. Who could look unkindly, or without respect, on a man, martyred to the most noble, and generous of human affections? He seemed disposed to converse with us, and we slackened our pace for a time, that we might enter into discourse with him. He appeared much attached to the contemplation of the great and wild scenes of nature, which surrounded us, and was fond of describing them. He pointed out some lead-mines, among the hills, on the opposite shore of Lochiel, about which, the country people had many superstitions;

believing them to be possessed by fairies, and other imaginary beings, with which untutored fancy naturally peoples these solitary recesses. He talked with much feeling about Morvern, the country of Fingal; a mountainous district, of no great extent, but singularly wild, which we then were reluctantly leaving unvisited behind us. It is nearly of triangular form, bounded on the south-west, by the sound of Mull, on the south-east, by the Loch-Linnhe, and on the north, by the lake of Sunart, except where the narrow passage of Achnatoa, on the north-eastern angle, leaves room for entrance into this sequestered district. The waters all communicate with one another, and with that on the banks of which we were travelling. This country naturally led to the subject of the ancient poems; some of which, Mr. Macdonald assured me, he had heard recited there, as he had done in other parts of the Highlands. You will easily conceive, that a person of his cast of mind must have found in them the attraction of congenial sentiment; and, indeed, he talked of them with visible pleasure. He had, yesterday, he said, been
rambling

rambling in the vale of Glenco, whose savage grandeur, and pastoral amenity, opposed, as they are, to each other, you will not doubt, had peculiarly charmed him:—

In truth, he was a strange and wayward wight,
Fond of each gentle, and each drearful scene.

In darkness, and in storm, he found delight:

Nor less, than when on ocean-wave serene

The southern sun, diffused his dazzling shene.

E'en sad vicissitude amused his soul:

And if a sigh would sometime intervene,

And down his cheek, a tear of pity roll,

A sigh, a tear so sweet, he wished not to controul*.

FARE thee well, Macdonald!—May the peace of nature, to which, in thy solitary wanderings, thou fleest, from the cruel prejudices of the world, shed the balm of comfort on thy wounded spirit!—We travellers must hasten on.—Adieu!

IN about two hours after this parting, we arrived at Maryborough, the town of which Fort-William is the citadel. It stands at the head of Lochiel; a narrow water, twelve or thirteen miles in length. The town consists chiefly of one narrow street, considerably less than

* Minstrel, b. II. st. 22,

than a mile long. Betwixt the farther end of it, eastward, and the fort, is a pleasant green, bounded by three lines of cottages, forming so many sides of a square, to the south, the east, and the west; it lies very agreeably open to the lake, at the other cardinal point.

As the Lochiel communicates, by the Linnhe, with the Atlantic Ocean, it is frequently visited by large shoals of herrings; and the inhabitants have, for some time, pursued this fishery with profitable activity; but to their great disappointment, the fish have, this summer, almost failed them. A quantity, worth the capture, had scarcely appeared. A number of boats, upwards of thirty, were lying idly inverted on the beach; a spectacle, from whence much mortification, and more distress to the place, were to be inferred. I had some conversation with a merchant of the town, who lamented the failure, as of serious consequence to every order of inhabitants. The Loch has sufficient depth of water, to admit trading vessels of some burthen; so that Maryborough is not without commerce.

THERE

THERE are many extensive sheep-farms in this country, and it is thought, that the situation of Fort-William might answer well to the establishment of a woollen manufacture; if some intelligent individual, or rather company, with a sufficient capital, could be induced to make the experiment. This situation, which serves, at present, only for the convenience of exporting the raw material, as the country does for its growth, might be adapted to the exportation of stockings, and coarse woollen cloths. The population of the neighbourhood too would be much augmented, and bear a more creditable proportion to the sheep, its present chief occupants.

ALTHOUGH there is nothing in Maryborough, to claim particular notice, we have been glad, after travelling two hundred miles, since we have seen a town, to avail ourselves of our present comfortable station, to enjoy a little repose for the remainder of the day, after an early arrival.

AFTER dinner, we walked to Fort-William: An old invalid conducted us round the works,

works, and pointed out the ground, where the rebels were intrenched in 1745; described the fall of the king's forces, the raising of the siege, the consternation, and disgraceful retreat of the enemy, the burning of the town, and other circumstances of that event; and related his story with some intelligence, and animation. The narration, however, though not uninteresting on the spot, gives you nothing, with which history has not already better acquainted you.

THE citadel, though not large, is capable of receiving six, or eight hundred men: Its form is triangular, with two bastions: It is mounted by fifteen twelve pounders, besides mortars, and its armory is not ill-furnished. The ordinary garrison consists of invalids, and those not numerous: Captain Cochrane is the commanding officer.

THIS fort, and the town were built by King William III. The names of either want no explanation; any more than the two heads upon the shillings of this reign. The town is, as it ought to be, a help meet for
the

the fort; and the idea of marriage, according to the true meaning of the institution, is no ill representation of their union. In the citadel, must be supposed, Wisdom, Foresight, Strength, Power, and Protection: In the town, Prudence, Submission, Fidelity, Assistance; if neatness and beauty be superadded, so much the better. All the interests of the two parties are sacredly one and the same. That my allegorical account is, in general, applicable to Fort-William, and Maryborough, I have no reason to disbelieve; but whether, in fact, it be so oftener to citadels, and their dependent towns, than to matrimonial connexions in life, I will leave it for connoisseurs to decide. Happy would it be, in either case, were the known exceptions fewer!

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

Inverness, Aug. 11, 1792.

THE morning of yesterday loured, and presaged us but an unpleasant ride of thirty miles to Fort-Augustus. We were, nevertheless, impatient to proceed, and accordingly set forward. A miserable half-way house, at a place called Later-Findlay, on the Loch Lochy, received us, dripping wet, about noon. A pitiful peat-fire upon the hearth afforded no opportunity of removing this inconvenience. The house, however, furnished eggs, and, as we had been provident enough, to bring bread and wine in our carriage, we did the best we were able, to fortify ourselves against the consequences of continuing as wet as we had entered. The place was disagreeably crowded by peasants, now employed in this quarter, on the military roads, whose officiousness and curiosity molested us. Though the appearance of the sky indicated more rain, and a road, out of repair, augured ill to our progress, every
cir-

circumstance discouraged our stay, where we were: We therefore got into motion again, as soon as we could.

BEFORE we had gone a mile, a driving shower set, with a furious wind, in our faces; the day became very cold, and we were rather alarmed at a sensation of numbness, in our wet clothes. To have caught an ague in the Highlands, at the approach of autumn, in any view, appeared rather a formidable, than an improbable evil, in our actual situation. Our wine was exhausted at dinner, and we were provided with no means of obviating the ill effects, which menaced us. The rain increased every moment, and poured in torrents upon us. Neither house, nor tree were found to give us shelter; of which, indeed, had it offered, we could not have availed ourselves safely, soaked, as we were, in wet garments. Our only resource was in our movement; and that, from the state of the roads, was necessarily slower than we wished.

WE were jogging and jumbling on, in no good spirits, when the sight of a turf-covered
cot,

cot with a sign-post fortunately suggested the resource of a bottle of whiskey; which, detestable as we had thought it hitherto, was now our grand catholicon, and we took to it with all the cordiality imaginable. One of our party cried out: "*repetatur haustus!*" whilst another insinuated, that the sobrest conduct, for the moment, might be to get drunk: A third confirmed his aphorism by classical authority, saying, that to be soberly drunk, was "*insanire cum ratione,*" and, to say the truth, I know not, whether it were not attended to, with a degree of perseverance, more than exemplary in common cases. Had not our case been really critical, and the expedient, to which we recurred, perfectly successful; so as to make it not entirely unworthy of notice, for the benefit of travellers, in their novitiate, and under the same combination of circumstances, you would hardly, I fear, have thought the foregoing incidents of sufficient consequence to deserve room in my letter.

ON quitting Fort-William in the morning, we lost sight of water, the deluge excepted,

cepted, in which we were riding, for the space of an hour. We then came to the Lochy; a long lake, which we coasted on the military road, which might be said to hang above it, among the precipices on our right; it being generally cut out of the solid rock. Near the farther end of this water was Latter-Findlay abovementioned. A small interval of entire land succeeded again; and after it, we coasted another lake, the Oich; a small, but beautiful water, through the narrow green vale of Glengary, overhung on either side by mountains, of stupendous height, and fringed with wood down to the water's edge. On the farther shore of the lake, which lay on our left, we saw the mansion-house of the family of Glengary, most pleasingly situated in a sylvan retirement; and, not far from it, the ruins of an antient castle. The expanse of the lake is broken agreeably by one or two picturesque little islands. The scenery of this glen had, in more auspicious weather, matched any thing we had yet seen in the Highlands. But the rain ceased not.

LOCH OICH was left at no great distance behind us, when we ascended a rising ground, which gave us the satisfaction of seeing Fort-Augustus in the plain below. There is nothing but a scattered village in its neighbourhood. The only house of any pretension was our inn; and an excellent one we found it.

FLINGING off my wet clothes upon our arrival, I went instantly to bed, and slept till supper; when we were most comfortably regaled with goat-soup, inferior only to that of turtle, and with moor-game, fish, &c. The luxury of our cheer, the smiling reception of our hostess, and the general goodness of her accommodations, soon restored our spirits; and the little miseries of the day, became a subject of amusement for the rest of the evening.

Fort-Augustus, Sept. 10.

THIS morning we looked into the citadel, which is more considerable, in extent, than that of Fort-William, its ramparts having four bastions. It is, like that, garrisoned by invalids.

THE

THE chain of forts, including Fort-George, said to be much the most important of the three, was, originally, of great consequence in a military view. Since the year 1745, one of the chief services derived from them, has been that of scouring the country of gangs of robbers, who infested it. A dangerous banditti, about twelve years ago, employed some little force from the two smaller forts, and a great deal of search and pursuit among the caves and fastnesses of the mountains. They consisted of a set of thieves, deserters and murderers, leagued together, to the great terror and annoyance of an extensive district. The ringleaders were at length taken by the military parties: Some of them were transported, and the rest hanged. Since that period, the country has been perfectly safe.

ANOTHER benefit of these forts, and of the roads connected with them, though less directly proposed in their establishment, has been, among other auxiliary causes, the diffusion of the English language, and the civilization of the Highlands. With regard to our language, it has been often observed by

travellers, that it is no where in North-Britain spoken, with better pronunciation, or more purity, than in the line of the forts; and particularly at Inverness. A small portion of the Gaelic, naturally mixes with it, in the mouths of the common people; but little of the Scottish dialect.

THE English garrisons, which have successively occupied the forts, and the number of travellers, to whom the military roads have opened an easier access to the Highlands, have undoubtedly introduced the example of gentler and more polished manners, and have helped to banish those exclusive prejudices and partialities in favour of an individual superior, and of every thing attached to him, which had grown to such ferocity, under the system of clanship. Liberality and expansion of mind have, by degrees, succeeded to these narrow sentiments. The heart of the Highlander, at present, glows with loyalty and patriotism, and shews itself capable of every generous impression.

WE

WE have heard much conversation here, as well as in other parts of the Highlands, since we have been verging toward the north-east, concerning the late insurrections in Ross-shire. These disturbances have arisen from the sudden extermination of a number of small farmers, who have been used to maintain their families by a dairy, the rearing of a few black cattle for sale, and a little tillage, in order to give place to the establishment of extensive sheep walks; which unite many of the old divisions of estates under the occupation of a single tenant. People here assert, that thirty-seven families were lately turned adrift in the prosecution of this scheme. The number may have been exaggerated; and, as I am rather inclined to believe so, I should not have ventured to particularize it, had I not heard it repeated, without variation, by different persons. But could it be affirmed, that only half the number, or even but a fourth part, were included under this calamity, the evil is very great, and of such nature, as surely to merit the particular attention of government, so long as it shall be thought conducive to national prosperity, ra-

ther to have a country peopled by human creatures, than by sheep. The alarming emigrations, which, for some years, have taken place, from the Highlands, are partly attributed to this innovation. That the rent-rolls of estates are augmented, and the avarice of landlords successfully gratified by it, cannot be doubted; but where individuals grow opulent by the depopulation of a country, they make more haste to grow rich, than ought to be suffered by its rulers. If woollen manufactures can be established, or other objects found, in due time, to employ the numerous hands thus cruelly despoiled of the means of obtaining bread, national policy may possibly defend the scheme. But can humanity be easily reconciled to it, where the condition and antient habits of a great number of people are at once to be changed without consent, and the happiness and welfare of many, may, probably, be sacrificed to the experiment. Great caution and tenderness ought to be shewn in such cases. The proprietors of lands should content themselves with very deliberate and gradual improvements, when

when sudden ones cannot be pursued without cruelty or outrage to their fellow-creatures.

As the assizes at Inverness are about to begin, we mean to be present at the trial of the ringleaders of this insurrection; some of whom, it is feared, pitiable as the case, from the foregoing representation, should appear, were guilty of violent and unjustifiable proceedings. There is, however, a point of necessity, if those, who suffer, could but impartially distinguish it, beyond which no human being is obliged to bear without resistance.

THE subject of the sheep-walks naturally led us to make some enquiries into the average price of wool in the Highlands. But as more extensive examination is necessary to gain precise knowledge in this matter, I dare not be persuaded, that we obtained sufficient data to establish this medium with exactness. As the price, however, in most parts is much inferior to that, which this article generally bears in England, and that often less owing to its quality, than to the want of opportunity of turning it to the best advantage; it may be

asked why it should not answer to individuals of property, to try the experiment of manufactures in the Highlands, as well as it does to others to become wool-growers. The convenience of exportation cannot any where be supposed wanting in a country, intersected, in every direction, by rivers and estuaries communicating with the ocean, on the north, east, and west; and by which, at present, the raw material, prematurely, finds its way out of the country, before it has been made, as far as, perhaps, it might be, conducive to the benefit of its inhabitants. If it be alledged, that provisions may not be produceable in the Highlands in an abundance, requisite for the cheap maintenance of manufacturers, were they to become numerous; and that, moreover, it is uncertain, whether, or in what situations, the country may be sufficiently productive of coals to encourage the establishment of fabrics, it might be answered, that these points, should in justice and prudence, have been ascertained before the determination of converting large and comprehensive districts into sheep-walks, which, unless manufactures can be established, not
very

very remote from them, have a manifest tendency to diminish population, an evil, for which no advantage resulting to individuals, can compensate to the community.

FORT-AUGUSTUS left behind, we passed through a country, rising agreeably into wooded hills and mountains, with vallies tolerably cultivated betwixt them. It is called Glendomore, and forms part of the estates of the Frazers of Lovat.

As we were ascending the hills we overtook a stout, honest looking Highlander, of whom we enquired our way; for we saw at some little distance a separation of roads, and the military one had already diverged much from the strait line. Finding this man good-humoured and communicative, I entered into conversation with him. Though he was on foot, his activity enabled him, in a skipping kind of walk, to keep pace with my horse for nearly an hour. He acquainted me, that his vocation was fox-hunting; and he expressed himself properly in saying so. His professed business, for several years, had been
the

the pursuit and destruction of the foxes, which frequent this country, and make great depredations among the sheep. In these excursions he is armed with a gun, has always one attendant to wait his orders, and is followed by dogs of different species, greyhounds, spaniels, terriers, &c. This suite is maintained for his use at the expence of the county; on whose account others are employed in the same way. Five shillings is paid for every fox taken. Martens, mountain-cats, and eagles are casually, objects of his pursuit. The skins of the first of these animals are the sole reward of his exertions and success with respect to them. What compensation is made for mountain-cats, and eagles, I did not understand. The latter are very hostile to the younglings of the flock, and much vigilance, and sometimes danger, must be submitted to, in order to destroy them. A method commonly practised is, to lay a dead horse near the crags in which they build; for the situation of their aeries is soon discovered by those concerned to observe their flight, or listen to their screams. The hunters watch with their guns under the covert of trees or rocks; and
when

when the family are settled on the carcase devouring their repast, discharge their pieces at the same instant. But as the vigilance and quick-sightedness of these birds, oblige their pursuers to take their stand at a considerable distance, the best marksmen often miss their aim. Sometimes these huntsmen ascend to the pinnacle of the crag, fix ropes about them, and then letting themselves down into the nest, take the young eaglets. But these adventures are attended with too much peril, to be very frequent. In conveying the idea of a family at their meal, my expression was, according to the mountaineers account, literally proper; for if a party of three or four eagles are seen swooping down on the same prey, they are always supposed an old pair and their young ones, before the latter are arrived at that state of maturity; at which they are always driven from their native crags, to establish themselves on some rock or precipice at a considerable distance; as more than one pair of full grown eagles rarely attempt a settlement in the neighbourhood of each other; and the attempt is never made without a fierce attack upon the invaders
from

from the antient occupants of the domain. In confirmation of their jealousy of an appropriated district, Buffon, speaking of the habits of the eagle, says: *Il est solitaire comme le lion, habitant d'un desert, dont il defend l'entrée & l'usage de la chasse à tous les autres oiseaux: car il est, peut-etre, plus rare de voir deux paires d'aigles dans la meme portion de montagne, que deux familles de lions dans la meme partie de foret; ils se tiennent assez loin, les un des autres, pour que l'espace, qu'il se sont departi, leur fournisse une ample subsistence: ils ne comptent la valeur & l'etendue de leur royaume, que par le produit de la chasse**.

It is, with some surprise, after what I learnt from my experienced mountaineer, I read in Buffon concerning the eagle: "*Quel-qu' affamé qu'il soit, il ne se jette jamais sur les cadavres.*" To say the truth, unless the great painter of nature contented himself with flighter information than usual, as throughout his description, he seems desirous of maintain-

* Les Oiseaux de Buffon; Tom. I. 113. Edit. de Paris duod. 1770.

ing a certain dignity, or rather royalty of character in his eagle, it might be suspected, that he thought *a priori* such condescension as that of feeding on the carcase of a dead horse, too unbecoming a conduct to be admitted as true; a kind of “scandalum magnatum” on his king of birds. I allow that this passage is found in his chapter of the grand eagle, and that, with Aristotle and other naturalists, he distinguishes several sorts; but in the whole paragraph, he is evidently speaking of qualities attributed to them all.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Gray, in the first part of his two great odes, representing his feathered king as

Perching on the sceptered hand
Of Jove———.

has, in the second of these divine compositions, not allowed his eagle to breakfast even on the delicate flesh of a dead bard, this was probably, owing not to any error in natural history, but to the pride of his lyric muse.—

On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
 Smear'd with gore, and ghastly pale;
 Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail;
 The famish'd eagle screams, and passes by.

Mr. Gray need not be supposed to mean, that the eagle was, less than the raven, naturally disposed to have made a hearty meal on Cadwallo, Urien, or Modred; but his muse sublimely represents them as feeling such seemly horror at the massacre of Bards,

Whose magic song
 Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-top't head,

that, as well they might, under such an emotion, one sails affrighted by, the other famished, passes with a scream.

BUT it is high time to return to my man in the mountain, whom I seem to have left talking to himself.—“ In our intervals of leisure” continued he, with something of archness in his look, which I did not understand, “ we fox-hunters, sometimes, run greater risks than in climbing rocks for eaglets; and that is when we skip from crag to
 crag,

crag, and one summit of rock to another, to chase the red-deer on the mountains. But profit brings pleasure: this is the game we like best, and happy he who gets it. When an adventure of this sort has answered to me, I slip my booty into some pit till night, then returning fling it on my shoulders, and hie home with it to my cottage; where my family, and a friend or two in the secret, make merry over it for days together; we salt up the hams for our Christmas cheer, and a dainty dish they make us." He described too, with great glee, the excursions, which he makes every year, in the month of August, with shooting parties of gentlemen, who come from the Lowlands, and, sometimes, from England, in quest of grouse and other mountain game, "a sort of diversion," he observed, with a sigh, "which was likely, too soon, to be at an end, as the birds were grown very scarce, since the poor cottager's farms had been turned into sheep-walks, and shepherds had burnt up the heath, which served for cover to the game."

OUR mountaineer, now giving us some useful directions about our way, turned off into a bye path, and disappeared.

AFTER much descending and mounting, we found ourselves on elevated ground, parted into different eminences, and covered with birch-trees, grey mossy crags shooting rudely among them ; a strange and romantic scene. The hollow way, through which the road is carried among these cliffs, is called Glen-neagh, famous for its wild and rugged scenery. As we were winding laboriously up the last acclivities, the roaring of unseen waters suddenly disturbed the silence, which had prevailed around us. The sounds, as we proceeded, increased upon the ear ; and were, at length, decidedly those of some tremendous cataract tumbling from a lofty precipice. A few minutes brought us within sight of it, not far from the head of the cliff, over which it poured. It was the celebrated fall of Fyres ; the greatest cascade in the Highlands. Whilst we were surveying it from above, a woman, who saw us at her cottage-door near the road, stepped forward,
and

and offered to guide us to the bottom ; where only, she acquainted us, we could see the whole.

It was the most precipitous descent, down which we had yet ventured, and, but for catching, now and then, at the stump of a tree, a root of heath, or branch of some straggling birch ; creeping sliding, and balancing our bodies in every sort of attitude ; it had been impossible to reach the bottom of this perilous declivity, unless by falling down it, and meeting instant destruction. I confess, that whilst my feet were groping for unseen hold, as I hung by my hands, with my face downwards, at the root of a tree, a situation more than once repeated in the descent, I felt a degree of palpitation very discouraging to my progress into this infernal region. Our guide had, from the force of habit, pretty composedly gone all the lengths that became a prudent woman, and was contented to stop, where the foot-steps of former adventurers had been so rare, as to have left no visible traces : but she assured us, she had seen some few, whose curiosity had led

A a

them

them down to a small green hillock at the foot of the rocks; the only spot for a full view of the scene. What had been done, was, certainly, not impossible; and it seemed disgraceful to retreat. After another venture, or two, and fresh resolution, we arrived at the last ledge of rocks; from whence we sprung with a doubtful leap, and found ourselves stationed on the said green hillock, at least five hundred feet below the summit of the hill. We now beheld this grand cataract in front, pouring down from a height very little less than that just mentioned; but broken in its progress through the different stages of the rocks. At the last stage, but one, where the freedom of its passage was arrested, by a narrow channel, in a cleft of the precipice, it grew furious and foaming from the obstruction; till, at length delivered, it issued forth on a broad surface of rock just below, and, in one vast and voluminous sheet, tumbled into the profound gulph with a momentum, that shook the Glen, and filled the circumambient space with a continual spray.

Now

Now rolling down the steep amain
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour!
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

WHEN we had re-ascended our lofty hill, which from the bottom appeared all but perpendicular, we were led into a vast subterranean, beneath a neighbouring eminence, called the Giant's Cave; but, for want of light, we could not explore it sufficiently to reward our curiosity. We were much more interested by the little fall of Fyres, which we saw from a bridge at no great distance from the great cataract. This has the character of a torrent, but owes its principal consequence to the huge uncouth masses of rock, which form its bed, and project above, and on either side of it, with a sort of chaotic confusion, and savage magnificence, bordering upon the horrid.

AFTER viewing this scene, under the mingled emotions of surprise, comfortless discouragement, and cold shuddering, which it peculiarly occasioned, we were agreeably relieved by a green pastoral meadow at the

bottom of the hill, which the eye caught, in sudden transition, just as we were moving from the bridge. The water of the great fall, after a circuitous course in the valley, had spent all its rage, and we now beheld it gliding placidly along beneath the wooded cliffs, which surrounded this peaceful spot, sequestered from intrusion, and solely occupied by shepherds and their flocks. Its smooth level verdure, under mingled shade and sunshine, the stillness and serenity of every thing immediately around it, were well calculated to bring our ruffled feelings to a calm and pleasurable state. Long could we have loitered on its confines; but it was time to quit them.

WE had scarcely re-mounted our vehicle, and passed the varied scenery of Glen-Neagh, when the long reach of Loch Ness, the south western part of which had been screened from us by intervening hills in the earlier part of our ride, came at once into sight. Its clear expanse reflected the opposite shore, the lofty mountains of Urquhart and Mealfourvony and their hanging groves of oak and birch. We
procured

procured a little refreshment at a public-house on the military road, called the General's Hut; which has nothing to recommend it, but its situation on the banks of this beautiful lake. Our stay here was very short, as we had still nineteen miles to Inverness. We had not rode a great way before the water was concealed from us by coppices of hazel and birch, under which our route continued for about five miles. On leaving their coverture, we found the whole face of the country entirely changed. The mountains had sunk into hills and gentle elevations, and a vast plain we saw stretched out beyond them, which the Frasers of Boneham had covered with woods of fir to a great distance. The road now lay through a champain country between these noble forests; over which, as they were still young, the eye ranged at large without confinement. Within a few miles of the capital of the Highlands, the country becomes very open, and has, of late years, been considerably improved by tillage. As we had now passed the woods, the spires of churches, and other prominent edifices of Inverness, appeared to much advantage. The river Ness,

which issues from the Loch, left, at present, several miles behind us, flows through the plain to the town, and falls into the Murray Firth, on its eastern side.

WE entered Inverness at a lively and busy moment. The streets were crowded, and every thing in motion, on account of the assizes. The town is large, and well built: the houses lofty, and many of them handsome. Near the center stands the courthouse, a modern structure, having an elegant tower, adorned with Doric and Ionic pilasters, at the corners, one above another; the entablatures of each ornamented with large vases; those in the Doric entablature plain; the upper set, in the Ionic, festooned with drapery; a spire crowns the whole. We had more leisure, as it happened, to contemplate this edifice, than we wished, whilst our servant was making the tour of the inns to procure us accommodations. Not to notice inferior houses, there are two very spacious and good inns, besides a very respectable hotel. Two applications, however, were made for us without success. Room was
with

with difficulty procured at the second-rate inn; where we were, nevertheless, very civilly received, and, notwithstanding the fullness of the house, and the engagement of the master and his servants, we shared their attentions more than we could have expected. We had, in short, nothing to complain of; but much to commend.

I MAKE no scruple of sometimes taking notice to you of circumstances relative to our inns, and accommodations at them. Travellers seem to have been too frequently censured upon this account by the fastidiousness of affected critics. You, who see things in a juster light, know, with what propriety, they may, occasionally, be adverted to. What can be of greater consequence to any one, who quits his chimney-corner, whether to see the world, to transact business, or merely to visit his friends or relatives at a distance, than these necessary resting places? They are certainly oftener the concern of travellers than any other one object that can occur in a long journey. The whole of his ease and comfort, apart from weather, roads, and the vehicle by which he

travels, depends, absolutely, upon them; and to find these houses well adapted to relieve the weariness and wants of travelling, and the behaviour of those, who superintend and manage them, civil and obliging, is one proof, among others, of the civilized state of manners, of the hospitable spirit, and even of the prosperity of a country. All that an inn-keeper has to give beyond meat, drink and lodging, which, by the way, can only be excellent in a prosperous country, is the civility and attention of his manners; which, not being paid for, are to be set down to a hospitable and friendly disposition; and where this is commonly met with from persons of that description, it argues in favour of the general character of the people, from the lower branches of which they are taken. From my own experience, and that of others, I have the highest commendation to bestow on the civility and attention of Scottish inn-keepers, and of their ambition to give the best entertainment in their power upon very moderate terms. Their houses, every where, but in the poorer districts

tricts of the Highlands, are equal to our own in England; and the new ones established of late, in many of their towns, are undoubtedly superior in point both of accommodation and elegance. I must add, too, what I have hinted somewhere already, that persons in this way of life, are, universally more intelligent, than those of the same order in South Britain; an advantage to themselves and to their guests, which must be attributed to that better education, which, in every corner of Scotland, is given to the inferior order of its inhabitants*.

INVERNESS is a populous and flourishing place. The Murray Firth furnishes it with opportunity of an active commerce, particularly that of importation. Many articles of consumption, indispensable to the Highlands, and for which its own natural produce, or manufactures, do not suffice, are brought in

* That this topic may not be repeated, it is thought proper to observe here, that in the remainder of this tour, circuitously made from Inverness to Berwick, we found every reason to confirm that which has already been said in favour of Scottish inns, and of those who keep them.

hither ;

hither ; as grain, porter, hardware, haberdashery, &c. so that this town is the market of a wide extent of country. Their export of salmon is considerable, and they engage in the herring-fishery of the Firth, from September to February. Herrings are, whilst the season continues, an article of importance to this town, and are often sold here at the rate of sixpence for twenty score ; but they lose their flavor, and become insipid, as the spring advances.

MUCH is done at Inverness, in the linen and hemp manufactures ; in the former, for wearing apparel and household use ; in the latter, for canvas bags, ropes, and naval tackle. A great deal of sewing thread is spun here, and in the vicinity ; and the bleaching of it employs many hands.

INVERNESS is the winter residence of many of the Highland gentry, who resort hither, partly for society and amusement, and partly for the education of their children. There are several schools of better order, for both sexes ; and an academy for instruction in the sciences

sciences and, I believe, for gymnastic accomplishments is about to be established *.

Sept. 12.

THE trial of the Ross-shire rioters was this day opened at the circuit court of justiciary, and the town is full of peasants, from Ross and Sutherland, anxiously waiting its issue. We squeezed through the crowd into court. Lord Stonefield is the judge of session, who presides at the present assize. The preliminary forms being gone through, nine or ten of the prisoners appeared at the bar, "indicted and accused of the crimes of riot, assault, and battery, by assembling with a number of other persons, and forcibly relieving, from a pound-fold, certain cattle confined therein; and, at the same time, assembling and beating the gentleman and his servants, who had pounded the cattle †." After some eloquent pleading on both sides, and an examination of the prisoners and witnesses, which lasted several hours, a verdict of "not

* The academy has since been opened, and an ode, said to possess considerable merit, celebrating this event, appeared in one of our magazines.

† The words of the indictment,

guilty,"

guilty," was given by a *plurality* of voices, according to the law of Scotland. The men were acquitted and dismissed from the bar. The cattle, mentioned in the indictment, were the cows and horses of these poor men, which had been removed from their old pastures, and pounded, to make room for the sheep of the prosecutor, who did not appear to have given fair and legal notice of his entrance on their premises; the main circumstance on which their acquittal seemed to turn; but the active conduct of the prosecutor, and persons attached to him, must also have contributed much to it with the jury. He, a captain, retired from the service, his brother and servants met these men with fire-arms, and threatened the use of them so violently, that the blows which followed from the other party, were doubtless considered by the jury, as given in self-defence. According to the prosecutor's account in court, they fell so thick upon his shoulders, and other parts of his person, that when the judge desired him to give some idea of the quantity, he said, in the language of his late profession, that they were as numerous, and succeeded each other

as quick, as strokes on the drum at Roll-Call. The simile was certainly expressive of a very spirited movement in the "allegro style," and the gravity of the court was somewhat less at this moment of the prosecutor's narration, than his own must have been at the time of the event; for, from what I saw of the men of Ross, I should suspect that their touch, in the execution of this air, though sufficiently rapid, was not destitute of feeling and emphasis.

Sept. 13.

TO-DAY followed the trial of several cottagers farmers, connected with the former in their opposition to the sheep walks. Most of these, it was proved, with many others, whom they had excited, assembled together in an armed body, and seized upon, and drove away the sheep of certain proprietors from the counties of Ross and Sutherland, with an intention of forcing them out of these counties. The shortness of our stay would not allow us to attend their whole examination. But we were informed upon our journey, a day or two after, that two of them

were

were condemned to transportation for seven years ; some, to fines and imprisonment ; and others less culpable than the rest were dismissed. Their proceedings were violent and indefensible ; and, judging as well from the spirit, as the letter of written laws, no one thought they were unjustly dealt by. In the cause of humanity you, I am sure, will join with me in hoping, that neither these persons, nor any other in their predicament, have been turned adrift from their turf-built cottages, without knowing where to seek for bread for themselves and their families. It is not, indeed, credible, till proved by fact, that any thing in human shape should be so sordid and so savage, that, to become worth a few pounds more, (and what else but a halter ?) he would reduce a being of his own species, happy but to earn a bare subsistence by the sweat of his brow, to such a piteous state of helplessness and despair.

A Highland cottager, circumstanced as has been hitherto supposed, has enough to contend with in the rigour of inclement seasons, and a northern sky, without additional hardships.

ships. The subsistence of these poor people, in bad years, when their oats happen to fail as well in quantity, as in maturity, is, however, become considerably less precarious, than it was formerly, since the cultivation of potatoes has been introduced among them.

HAVING alluded to the effects of bad seasons in this country, I cannot conclude this long letter without mentioning a remarkable event, said, upon very good authority, to have occurred in the near neighbourhood of Inverness, about the end of the last century. An unfavourable season had occasioned such a failure of the crop, that it had only produced seed for the next year's sowing; and that, being damaged, failed to grow. The defalcation of two years provision of corn, fell so heavy upon some families of a particular district, that they had no other subsistence for twice twelve months, than the herbs, which they collected in the summer, and the seed of wild mustard, common in their fields, which they ground, and made bread of, for their food in winter. A third year came with no better prospect: Their case was now
despe-

desperate. No kind hand interfered, and nature no longer found nourishment from field-herbs, and wild mustard. The poor wretches in a body, consisting of every individual of four families, abandoned their habitations, where famine and death awaited them, and descending, hand in hand, into the plain; lamented their miserable fate in loud and unavailing cries, till their tears were exhausted. They then dispersed in anguish and bitterness of heart, most of them to meet no more; each going where chance, or hope of charity conducted their steps; some to serve, and more to beg their bread; the wife separating from her husband, and the mother from her children*.

* The reader will find this strange occurrence confirmed in Sinclair's statistic account; and he will there learn, that the hamlet, where these miserable people lived, was Clunes, in the parish of Kiltarity, and that the event took place in the reign of King William III.



LETTER

LETTER XX.

Nairn, Sept. 14, 1792.

IT was our first intention, on leaving Inverness, to have taken the direct road to this place; but we were assured, that, in avoiding a little detour by Fort-George, we should only save a few hours, and thus lose sight of that link in the chain of Highland forts, which is much the most worthy of notice; as being one of the most considerable and regular fortifications in Great Britain. We therefore, upon consideration, bent our course that way. And, indeed, we were approaching Fort-George, under a train of military ideas; as about midway we skirted the famous field of Culloden.

THIS plain is of great compass, and but too well calculated for trials of prowess between contending armies. All parties, at this time of day, concur in their sentiments on the issue of the battle of 1745; and it was not possible to pass the scene, where it was

B. b

fought,

fought, without some feeling of triumph; mingled, however, with regret, that the victor, on that decisive day, should not have been contented with conquest. May the motto of every British hero's sword henceforth be—

Parcere subjēctis et debellare superbos *.

THE next object, which arose to our notice, was the remains of a supposed Druid's temple; but they were not considerable enough to stop our progress; any more than the remnant of an old Norman castle, formerly one of the royal residences belonging to the ancestors of that family, whose hopes of re-establishment expired on the fatal field of Culloden. It was now a farm-house, and remained but like the relics of its royal owner's race, to tell the tale of its antient glory.

WE had not got clear of the slippery ground of Culloden, before our ride was marked by two incidents, either of which might have cut short this series of letters.

* Virgil.

Our horses, after having brought us thus far, safely from home, even through all the steepes and ruggednesses of the Highlands, both fell, and within ten minutes of each other. By the first fall, I was flung fairly over my horse's head, and partly upon my own: By the violence of the second, both I and my companion were thrown suddenly out of the carriage. Assistance and hospitality were fortunately at hand. To have received only a slight bruise *, where destruction seemed imminent, so much resembled good fortune, that we congratulated each other with as much cordiality, as we could have done on meeting with some positive benefit. A quarter of an hour retrieved our affairs; and, having lost neither man nor horse, we made our approaches to the fortress with intrepid composure, and entered the citadel without opposition.

CONSIDERING ourselves as in possession of the place, we had nothing to consult, but

* This the writer of the account met with the former of the two accidents: His companion, concerned only in the latter, escaped unhurt.

our amusement or curiosity in surveying the works at our leisure. The subaltern, who conducted us round them, having the honour of the fortress much at heart, took pains to shew us, in our walk, that every member of the works was within sight and defence of some other; that an enemy besieging the place could take no station, where he would not be exposed to its fire; that the depression of the out-works was so managed, as that the interior of the fortress commanded every part round it; that the works most remote from the centre, were open to those less distant; and that every line of defence was within point-blank musket shot*. Three parts of the whole fortress, which extends about a mile in circumference, are surrounded by the sea. It has four bastions, and is mounted by eighty cannon. Its situation is advantageous on the southern side of the Murray Firth, which opens into the German Ocean. Whether the maxims of Pagan, Blondel, or Vauban, have been most attended to in the construction of this fortress, required more sci-

* Of the centre of the work, we supposed him to mean, but possibly without due foundation.

ence to determine, than we found at hand. The interior of the citadel consists of the several spacious courts of barracks, very neatly built, and capable, according to our conductor's information, of receiving three thousand men. Having viewed the governor's house, a handsome structure, the chapel, magazines, &c. we went to our mess, at an apartment, where strangers are received; and we set forward in the evening for Nairn. We could not quit this fortress, which the casualties of war may render of such importance, and which so much art and science have been displayed to render respectable, as a place of strength in war, and commodious and elegant, as a place of military abode in time of peace, without admiring the progress of fortification from those rude times, when it consisted in nothing but raising a simple inclosure of trunks and branches of trees, with loose stones and earth inartificially heaped together, for the momentary protection of an armed force.

WE passed the village of Campbeltown, a small assemblage of houses, supported by its connexion with, and vicinity to the fort: It

seems to have been meant for a town, by the name; but there is nothing in its appearance to countenance that appellation.

THE country, all in view, is mostly open, and generally flat. It is far from being uncultivated, or wanting fertility; but it is not pleasant. It improved, however, in our progress toward Nairn, and grew interesting, when we came within sight of Calder-Castle, and its surrounding woods. This was Cawdor, the residence of the ancient Thanes; nothing of which now remains but an old square tower, and the draw-bridge. The present house is modern. We regretted much, that we were within three miles of this classic ground of Shakespeare, without having time to visit it: But night was coming on, and the plan of our journey would neither permit us to deviate now, or to return the next day *. Cawdor, therefore, looked like
for-

* Much less time had we to return to Inverness, where, since our departure from it, we had learnt, that the bed, on which Macbeth is said to have murdered Duncan, is still shewn in the castle. I find our great poet to agree with the Scottish historian, in the scene of this transaction. "Igitur re,"

forbidden ground; which, if not so satisfactory, it was more reverential, to contemplate at a distance.

WE slept last night at this royal borough, on the river Nairn, which gives name to the town. The houses, most of them, stand with their gable ends towards the street, and are unfociably detached from each other. There is nothing else remarkable in the town; except its appearance of poverty. There being nothing worth seeing within the precincts of the borough, our landlord has, this morning, been leading us just beyond them, whilst our carriage is getting ready, to an object, which, perhaps, may have been worth seeing sometime ago—the bridge, I mean, over the Nairn; of which the fury of a late inundation has broken down the greater part. This is supplied, at present, by wood attached to the remainder of stone. From this remnant, the bridge, in its former state,

re," says Buchanan, alluding to the prophecy of the witches, "cum intimis amicorum, in quibus erat Banquo, communicata, regem opportunum infidiis ad Ennerneffam nactus, septimum jam regnantem annum obtruncat. Lib. vii. Rer. Scotie. prope finem.

may be conceived to have been no contemptible structure. But that the glory of Nairn might not rest wholly on the fragment of a broken bridge, the good man shewed us, in its vicinity, the scite of an antient fort, long and obstinately defended by his townsmen, against an attack of the Danes. To see only the place, where something has been, that was worth seeing, is not seeing much. What we heard, however, of the ancient Nairnians, did credit to their prowess; and the present generation are not wrong in making the most of their fame.

It is not improbable, that we had seen the ruins of the castle in the stone-work of the bridge. Our passage over it, on our departure, will finish our tour of the Highlands. The Gaelic language was all yesterday giving way to our own: On the other side of the river we shall scarcely hear it more.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

Elgin, Sept. 15, 1792.

ON our way from Nairn we asked some herdsmen, naturally, in Shakespear's words——

How far is't call'd to Fores?

UNLIKE as these persons were to the weird sisters, they might, for aught we could tell, have stood where they did, when Banquo, after this question, proceeds with these which follow:——

—————What are these
So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
That look not like th' inhabitants o' th' earth,
And yet are on't? Live you, or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each, at once, her chappy fingers laying
Upon her skinny lips.—You should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so*.

* Macbeth, act I. scene 4.

UPON

UPON Macbeth's addressing them, you recollect, that the three hail him successively—
 “Thane of Glamis, Thane of Cawdor, and King hereafter.”

THOUGH no witches arrested our course on the road to Fores, you will not wonder, that the idea of Shakespear, which every where operates like witchcraft on his countrymen, should do it in this track; and it will, perhaps, amuse you, as it does ourselves, while the subject of Macbeth forces itself, as it were, upon us, to compare our poet and the great Latin historian of Scotland, upon this incident; the main spring of the drama. “Macbeth,” says Buchanan, “having always despised his cousin's (Duncan's) indolence of character, and secretly cherished, in his mind, hopes of the kingdom, is believed to have been confirmed in those hopes by a certain dream. For one night, when absent, a little longer than usual, from the king, he imagined, he beheld three women, forms august beyond humanity; of whom the first saluted him “Thane of Angus,” the second
 “Thane

“Thane of Murray*,” the third, “King†.” Does not the historian, in this passage, seem almost lost in the poet? He has, however, doubtless delivered the current creed of Macbeth’s time, and, probably, that of Macbeth himself; at least, his persuasion of the moment; for murderers are always superstitious. Be this as it may: with regard to the story itself, if Buchanan left it silver in his coinage, the genius of Shakespear has operated the wonders of the philosopher’s stone, and transmuted it to gold. May it not be questioned whether his muse ever soared higher than in the terrible sublimity of his scene of witches? But it is time, with disenchanting eyes, to regard more common objects, or, in the phrase of the day, to see *things as they are*.

* Cawdor, the present Calder, in the county of Murray.

† The passage of the original is, as follows: Macbethus, qui, consobrini ignaviâ semper sprete, regni spem occultam in animo alebat, creditur somnio quodam ad eum confirmatus. Quadam enim nocte, cum longiusculè abesset a rege, visus est sibi tres scēinas formâ augustiore quam humana vidisse: quarum una Angusiæ Thanum, altera Moraviæ, tertia regem cum salatasset. *Rerum Scotic. Lib. VIII.*

WE

WE were riding through a cultivated country, producing oats, of course, together with wheat and barley; of which we saw crops more flourishing and abundant as we approached the river Findhorn. Being ferried over this respectable stream, we were within a mile of Fores. The river, as we proceeded, continued the principal feature of the country. It takes a long course from the south-west, and, after traversing a considerable part of Inverness and Nairn-shires, forms a beautiful bay a few miles to the north of Fores.

THIS town is pleasantly situated in the richer part of the county of Murray, and is, in itself, a place of some respect. The town-house, with its cupola, is the most prominent object in the eye of a stranger. Manufactures of sewing thread, and woven linen, are its principal resources of employment and industry.

SINCE we sat down to breakfast a paper has been brought us, stating, the project, and plan of a Free Mason's Lodge, about to be executed at Fores; accompanied by a request of
our

our contribution to the undertaking. Not having had the honour of initiation in the mysteries of that antient fraternity, and no connection with Fores beyond the moment, we have left the success of the scheme to the sympathy of the brotherhood.

THERE was nothing, however, we hope, in our refusal, of that ill-humour, which some persons would have expressed upon this application, who seem piqued, that their curiosity should never have been gratified with the secret for so many ages. I have heard an old lady or two, in my life-time, particularly virulent against that pertinacity with which the society have ever kept to themselves the mysteries of their institution. It has appeared like avarice of a valuable possession; the generous communication of which, these ladies thought due, if not to the world, at least to themselves, so passionately fond of secrets.

THE society is very numerous in North-Britain, and has a great many respectable members there; as indeed it has in most parts of Europe. That the different disgusted brethren

thren, who have pretended to discover the grand arcana of Free Masonry in the accounts they have published, have never really possessed them, there is reason to conclude, from their inconsistency with one another. It has been commonly understood, that the arcana of the society, like those of the Jesuits, are imparted gradually to its members, according to their merits and improvements. As these, in any given time, will have been exhibited in various degrees, according to the characters and abilities of the several novices, it may be supposed, that some of them, even after long labour and some pretension, having never attained the due measure of excellence in the profession of masonry, have grown impatient to be admitted into secrets to which they were not entitled, and becoming disgusted with a tedious novitiate, but just within the mount of the temple, have retreated in wrath, and pretended to reveal the divine secrets of the sanctuary itself. Some of these disgusted brethren may, perhaps, have passed the foreg or balustrade; or possibly the first and second courts; but that they should have ascended the twelve steps beyond, into the very temple
itself,

itself, and still farther, have lifted the veil of the sanctuary, and then, void of all grace and reverence, have brought themselves to divulge the grand mystery of mysteries must appear incredible to all sober men; almost as incredible, as that they should have no secret to divulge.

You who are not a Free Mason, should be informed that, in the foregoing allusions, no existing ceremonies of the order are meant to be shadowed forth; nothing more is intended than to express, allegorically, the progress of the brethren, from one degree of perfection to another, till they become worthy of the ultimate arcana of the institution: and no subject seemed to furnish terms so profoundly respectful to the order, as the probationary progress of the Levites in the temple of Solomon, the fraternity's great object of veneration.

WE had not long left Fores, before we saw a high monumental stone of blueish tint, and irregular shape. As it appeared too remarkable not to prompt some enquiry, which, however,

however, we found no body in our way to satisfy, I shall take the liberty of transcribing Mr. Pennant's account of it. He calls it a vast column, which, after he had been at the pains of taking its particular dimensions, will seem an appellation somewhat above its claim. "It is, he tells us, three feet ten inches broad, and one foot three inches thick; the height, above ground, is twenty-three feet; below, as it is said, twelve or fifteen. On one side are numbers of rude figures of animals and armed men, with colours flying; some of the men seem bound like captives. On the opposite side was a cross included in a circle, and raised above the surface of the stone. At the foot of the cross are two gigantic figures, and on one of the sides is some elegant fret-work. This is called, continues he, Sueno's stone, and seems, as Mr. Gordon * conjectures, erected by the Scots in memory of the final retreat of the Danes." If this conjecture of the occasion be well founded, this monument is called Sueno's stone by an ellipsis, for "the final retreat of

* Itin. Septent. 156.

the Danes under Sueno." But the final retreat of the Danes, only from the eastern continent of Scotland, can properly be meant; namely, that to which they were compelled under Macbeth, and his general Banquo, in the reign of Duncan I. betwixt 1034 and 1040. For the expedition of Haquin*, or or Haco, king of Norway, in the western isles, and the battle of Largs, on the coast of Aire-shire, which made the principal transaction in it, took place under Alexander III. 1263. Haco, as a descendant of the kings of Norway and Denmark, came to claim the isles of Bute, Arran and the Cumbraes, which had been promised to his ancestors by Donald Bane; but they had not been delivered up †, nor does there seem to have been any perfect reconciliation between the Dano-Nor-

* Called Haquin by Pontoppidan, in his *Gest. and Vestig. Danor in Scotiâ*, tom. II. 282—3.

† See Buchanan *Lib. III.* 130. Edit. Edinbg. Fol. Pontoppidan, who quotes this passage of Haco's expedition from Buchanan, (he says not from what edition,) makes Buchanan date these events 1264, a year later than my edition, and attributes too the promise of the islands mentioned in the text to Macbeth,—"*Causa belli pretendebatur, quod majoribus*

wegians, as Pontoppidan calls them, and the Scots earlier than the reign of James III. of Scotland, who married Margaret, the daughter of Christian I. in 1470, and received the Orkney islands as her dower. These islands had long been matter of contention between Denmark and Scotland, and Torfæus, in his history of the Orcades, says, that Christian had no right to alienate them without the consent of the senate or states of Norway; and that his successors at their inauguration took an oath to reclaim them. This they did too by various embassies, but without success. The result is, that, notwithstanding Sueno's retreat, early in the 11th century, from the eastern parts of Scotland, which the column in question might be meant to commemorate, the Danes long after made pretensions to various parts of Scotland, and several incursions in consequence of them; so that the retreat of that people under Sueno was far from *fuisset a Macbetho aliquot insulæ nondum essent traditæ*," which he immediately specifies to be the islands mentioned in the text. This mistake in Pontoppidan's edition of Buchanan, must have been owing to great negligence for Buchanan, (Lib. VII. 118. Edit. Edinb.) says: *Donaldus Banus (hoc est albus) ejus frater, qui Macbethi metu in æbudas profugerat Magno regi Norwegorum omnes insulas pollicitus*, Lib. II. 189

being

being their final one, according to Mr. Gordon's expression, as cited by Mr. Pennant. If a misrepresentation of this point of history hath appeared to you worth the pains taken to clear it up, you are obliged, for the occasion given me of doing it, to the blue column in the neighbourhood of Fores.

IN the process of our ride the country continues open, and fertile in all kinds of grain; but large spaces intervene covered wholly with furze, and peat-mosses, which add no beauty to any country, are not wanting. But that traveller's eye must be very fastidious, which cannot bear such objects, and expects every where to be delighted. As affording an article of wholesome fuel, the value of these mosses is indisputable, and is becoming greater at present upon this coast, since the scarcity or failure of coals has been a common subject of complaint.

THE town of Elgin, which we reached by dinner, is pleasantly situated on the river Liffie: Its principal street, is long, wide and regular: the houses, in general, large and

tially built; many of them on arcades. A venerable, but pleasing air of antiquity prevails over the whole place. They, who do not admit its Gaelic derivation from El-gin, which answers to Belle-Ville, a character to which in its more prosperous day, if not at present, it must have been justly entitled, discover its origin in the name of Helgyn, who, early in the tenth century, led the forces of Sigurd, earl of Orkney, to the conquest of Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, and Murray; and founded a town in the southern part of this last county. A circumstance, which corroborates this origin is, that the name of the town was antiently spelt Helgyn, as appears from an inscription in Saxon characters on the town-seal—"S. commune civitatis de Helgyn *."

THIS account is not, however, decisive, since, according to Torfæus, as cited by Pontoppidan, Earl Sigurd led his own forces in this expedition, and was the founder of a

* See the Rev. Mr. Grant's account of Elgin in *Sinclair*, vol. V.

town in “australi Moravia†,” the southern part of Murray.

THE catastrophe of Sigurd, after having made himself master of so considerable a part of Scotland is, as related by Torfæus, too remarkable not to deserve notice; and his probable connexion with this antient town will, without impropriety perhaps, allow me to introduce it here. That it may not occupy too much room, I will abridge Torfæus’s story, and give it you in the fewest words I can.

EARL Melbridge, a Scottish hero, distinguished by a very large tooth standing out from his mouth, had agreed upon a confe-

† Pontoppidan, Gest: &c. Tom. II. 280.—Torfæus says, that the Cordex Flategensis, his authority for Sigurd’s founding a town in the southern part of Murray, has omitted its name. I find, however, no supposition of more than one town being founded, in this region, by the Norwegians, and Mr. Grant gives a good reason why Elgin was that town, as being not distant from the Burgh in Duffus; a harbour which they commanded for the protection of their shipping. And why, after all, might not Sigurd allow Helgyn, probably the general next under him, to give his name to the town?

rence with Sigurd, at a time and place appointed, under a condition that either party should come guarded by a detachment of forty horse. Sigurd, fearing the Scot should exceed the number, craftily placed two men upon each of his forty horses. When Melbridge, who himself had observed good faith, approached near enough to the other party, to see two legs on each side of every horse, he excited his followers to revenge Sigurd's breach of terms, exhorting them to compensate by their valour and exertions for their inferiority of numbers. Sigurd now ordered half his men to dismount; but yet to follow the horsemen at a small distance. He then commenced the attack. The onset of the Scots was furious and indignant; but the fortune of the day was against them. They all fell beneath their enemy, who immediately proceeded to cut off the heads of the Scots, and carried them in triumph. But it happened, as Sigurd was violently spurring his horse, that he struck one of his legs against the monstrous tooth of his dying antagonist, who had still, however, strength enough to bite. The wound was deep and virulent: a swelling

swelling and mortification ensued, and an inglorious death became the reward of Sigurd's barbarous perfidy.

THE antient cathedral of Elgin, as a ruin, is still very fine ; and, in its actual state, bears sufficient testimony to its former magnificence. The two western towers yet standing, are lofty and grand, even without the spires, which once crowned them. Some part of the outward wall remains all round, as likewise of those of the cross aisles. The columns yet standing are light, and not inelegant. Sculptures, ornaments in stucco, inscriptions, &c. adorn the towers, the walls, the columns, &c. The chapter-house, on the north side, is still almost entire, supported by a single ramified column, rising from the center of its area : Parts of the choir are still distinguishable, and of a high airy gallery running above it. The architecture, like that most prevalent in the sacred building, of the north, is Saxon-Gothic : The dimensions are all great, and the effect of the whole, to judge from that which remains, must have been, in an uncommon degree, great and noble.

This cathedral was founded in the thirteenth century, by Bishop Andrew, when he was dean, or, perhaps, Bishop of Murray. It was nearly destroyed in an early period, and not rebuilt till 1414, or somewhat later. There is a spacious inclosure round it, without the cœmety, commonly called the college, which contained the prebendal houses, with each its garden: These, or a part of them, still exist; at present possessed by laymen, but retaining the antient names of the prebends, or canonries. The revenues, perquisites and privileges of this see were very considerable. Its income was partly paid in kind. Mr. Grant has given the particulars from the "Rentale Episcopatus Mor. in A. D. 1565," which I should have been tempted to transcribe; but that I have not the means of explaining to you some of the Scottish, or, perhaps, local terms, found in it. The articles of animal food, however, from which some ideas of the annual stores will be formed, are as follows: 60 beeves, 162 sheep, 166 lambs, 206 dozen of capons, 42 dozen of poultry, 166 geese, 8 swine, and 11 lasts, and 8 barrels of salmon. The rest of these stores

were

were in wheat, barley and oats, and in quantities seemingly proportionable to the specimen above. Among other matters, are 66 horse-shoes. The sum of 273l. 16s. 2d. was paid in money. These rents, with all that besides had accumulated to this bishoprick, from royal grants and private donations, would, it is said, at this time produce several thousand pounds a year.

I have not exhibited this catalogue to your view, with any design of sneering at the luxury of churchmen before the reformation, because I am persuaded, that hospitality and charity in the golden days of the catholic church, had ever much more concern in the expence of their brilliant revenues than their own private indulgencies. You will understand that I am speaking of the secular clergy. A very great portion too of their revenues was expended on the exterior magnificence of their establishment; their buildings, their processions, music, sacerdotal attire, &c. &c.

THE trade of Elgin is, at this day, very inconsiderable, and, except the export of drest skins

skins for the manufacture of gloves, is chiefly confined to the sale of commodities to serve the demand of the town, and of the country in its neighbourhood. Here is no manufacture of any consequence: The spinning of linen has, in some measure, succeeded to the working on woollen; a branch in which the inhabitants of Elgin were formerly occupied to considerable advantage.

As a royal borough, this town enjoys many valuable privileges. Its corporation-fund is respectable, arising from the leases of their land, from market-tolls, and some other resources. There are six companies of tradesmen incorporated by charter, who have established certain charities for the relief of the widows of their deceased brethren. The magistrates have availed themselves of antient grants from the crown, to found an English, and a classical school. The provisions, indeed, made for the education of youth in every town, and almost every village in North Britain; and the general attention given to prevent neglect and degeneracy in these institutions, reflects peculiar credit on this part of our

our nation, and may be reckoned among the most efficient causes of its rapid advancement in all the arts and improvements of civil life.

N.B. This letter was to have been succeeded by the life of Florence Wilson, a native of Elgin, distinguished early in the sixteenth century, by his genius, and by uncommon acquisitions in the Greek and Roman literature, and other branches of knowledge.



LETTER

LETTER XXII.

Aberdeen, Sept. 18, 1792.

LARGE woods in Scotland generally announce the residence of some noble, or opulent family, not distant. Extensive modern plantations, and some tracts of antient forest varied our ride this afternoon (Sept 15.) after we had passed some miles of corn country well cultivated. We had the satisfaction of seeing substantial farm-houses and decent cottages, built of stone. About sun-set, we found ourselves on the banks of the Spey; a very rapid stream. When we had ferried over, a few minutes brought us to Fockabars, in the north-western angle of the county of Bamff; a small town on the edge of those extensive woods which surround Castle-Gordon.

A little way from the town, betwixt it and the river, stands a very handsome battle-mented gateway; consisting of a porter's lodge,

lodge, and some length of wall carried out on either side of it, the whole making a good impression. What we conceived the foundation of the design, shall be mentioned by and by. As soon as we had passed this gateway, we followed a road for some time through a broad avenue in the wood, bordered on either side by shrubs, and winding gracefully along, till the trees, suddenly receding on all sides, left an open lawn of great extent, from which Castle-Gordon burst at once into sight with most magnificent effect. It is a light stone edifice, of extraordinary dimensions; its length, at first, the most striking. The body is joined, on either side, by two strait arcades; each running 120 feet clear to the eye, and terminating at two wings of offices, each of 60 feet long. The whole front is battlemented. The accessory parts are depressed in beautiful symmetry and subordination to the body, which, in turn, seems submitted to a stately square Saxon tower, rising in awful state from behind it; a relic of the antient castle of the Gordons. The effect of this combination is wonderfully grand. The architect's conception

tion of it was full of genius; of which, indeed, the whole of this superb pile bears undisputed proof.

Sept. 16.

WE were obliged to visit Castle-Gordon this morning, at so early an hour, that we could not think of asking admittance to see the apartments, which, from what we heard of them, we left unseen with much regret. The modern castle has been built about twenty years: Its situation is low, and has apparently little to recommend it; except the opportunity of producing the noble effect which I have mentioned from the position of the modern house, under the lordly brow of the old tower. The ground in front of the house is unfinished, and still inclosed with wood towards the river. This water will, undoubtedly, be laid open, if it can be kept within due bounds; which it now frequently transgresses in the fury of its inundations. What the country beyond it may have to shew to the house, except wood, we could not tell; but in traversing it yesterday afternoon, we saw no other interesting object.—The porter's lodge

lodge, and its appendages, which, I will now explain, represent in miniature, the whole front-plan of the modern house. The thought seems original ; at least, we recollected no instance of it elsewhere. It is ingenious enough ; and, if it produce not too frequent imitation, will continue to please. The execution of it is neat and elegant ; but it is one of those things, of which there should not be many. Mr. Baxter of Leith was, we are informed, the architect and builder of the new castle ; but the Duke of Gordon himself, is said to have suggested the best ideas of the plan.

AFTER we had passed a hill or two, over which our road led us from Fockabars, we lost sight of all that sylvan scenery, which characterizes the domain of the Duke of Gordon, and came into a bleak and naked country, where not a single object presented itself, which could entertain the eye. The roads too, in general, are bad, and by losing our way, we blundered into places almost impassable. Though our eyes were little amused, they were much occupied ; I mean
in

in finding where to extricate ourselves with safety from the difficulties of the way. Whilst we were plunging among bogs and morasses, a shower of rain, excessively violent, obliged us to mount a hill for the nearest shelter, in a dirty hamlet; where the cottages were as mean as those in the Highlands, and access to the door-way of each was much obstructed by an aromatic dunghill in close contact with the threshold; upon which we descended by an artless flight of steps made on the side of this putrescent mass, and thence into a smoaky hovel, right worthy of its entrance. We found within, however, kind and hospitable beings, to whom habit, the general conciliator of man with his misery, had rendered these unpromising circumstances perfectly easy and indifferent. The position of these dunghills is, undoubtedly, matter of choice, because the same is common all over the vicinity. It is meant, perhaps, to break the current of wind on their cold earth-floors; or to prevent the entrance of water in the deluging rains, to which they are subject in this windy region; or for some other reason better, or worse, which a stay of ten minutes gave

gaves us, we thought, no right to ask. Some familiarity must take place, before inquiries of such sort appear decent.

THE good people, as soon as the rain ceased, directed, and, indeed, assisted us, to get into the high road, from which we had deviated. Through this, we jumbled on to a late breakfast, at Keith; a small town, nine miles from Fockabars. What few particulars we have learnt of this place, I will give you whilst the refreshment of our horses obliges us to prolong our stay. A good deal of flax is produced in this neighbourhood; some of which the inhabitants of Keith are employed in dressing, spinning, and weaving; but the largeness of farms, and that continually increasing in this country, diminishes the quantity of labour necessary upon each, and throws many more hands into this town and its dependent hamlets, than can be constantly occupied in the manufactures which have suffered of late years from the prevalent mode of wearing cottons; so that the poor are very numerous and burthensome. I demanded of the person, with whom I had been conversing

D d

about

about Keith, why the farms were cast into such large allotments, when the first necessary consequence is the increase of the poor; and the second, a diminution of the population. "The farmers in this part," he answered, "cannot otherwise maintain themselves: Many upon small farms have broken, and lost the little they began with." I found, on pursuing my questions, that because the soil is tolerable, land is let, in this poor country, under a rude climate, at as high a rent, upon an average, as it is in many counties in England, viz. at 15s. and 20s. per acre. It is needless to add, that large farms and exorbitant rents, originating in the luxury or avarice of proprietors, must have the same ruinous tendency here, which they have every where else. When theories of government, or of œconomics, are the subject of discourse at the tables of these gentlemen, it is pleasant to hear how eloquently they insist, that the strength and prosperity of a state depends on its population, and how necessary it is, that good subjects should encourage it; and in that irritation of feeling, and fervency of spirit to which some gentlemen, are subject in conversation,

versation, it is, perhaps, sometimes asserted, that it is more necessary, each individual of a community should be covered, and have something to eat, than that any one should be cloathed in purple, and fare sumptuously every day. This all passes in an afternoon over their wine: in a morning, they are engaged with their stewards in contriving the surest means of defeating these humane and patriotic maxims.

A large bleach-field, with an extensive apparatus, has been established on the river Isla, within the precincts of this parish. The tannage of leather too, employs some of its poor inhabitants; and they who have nothing to do, but to meditate on the happy consequences of large farms and high rents, find a temporary resource in that charitable spirit, which is said to distinguish the more substantial householders, and proprietors of this extensive parish. That such of the poor as find constant occupation, and are able to gain a few pence in a week beyond the demand of their immediate necessities, may not be tempted to an avaricious accumulation,

that great engine of morality, a distillery of corn-spirits has been set up at Keith. I shall mention a circumstance nearly as much to the advantage of the place in acquainting you, that a school has been founded here, and is said to be very ably managed. Keith has the credit of having given birth to a very worthy and useful man; the late James Ferguson, well known in the world of letters, for his proficiency in mechanics, and natural philosophy; which his own application, without academical assistance, had enabled him to acquire, and which he taught successfully for a series of years, to a great number of pupils, by a method as singularly perspicuous, as it was peculiarly his own.

Huntley.

WE have been dragging along, chiefly on foot, nine miles from Keith, to this town, through roads more execrably bad, than those which we had met with before breakfast. They continued to improve in ruggedness till we reached Gilgatherabus Bridge, over the Burn of Cairny. The odd name of the bridge made us smile in the midst of our painful

ful efforts to proceed. From thence to Huntley, a long way measured by time, though short as to space, the roads were certainly at their "ne plus ultra" of imperfection. They are really a curiosity in this district; and the only one we met with in this second and last act of our day's journey, unless we except the uncouth name of the bridge just mentioned, which really sounded so comically to our ears in the mouth of a peasant, who told us it with a grin, that till we heard it repeated twice or thrice by some other people, we imagined, he had waggishly invented it.

THE face of the country we have passed, differs little or nothing from that which I described, in the former part of the day, till we begin to approach Huntley, in the environs of which the Duke of Gordon has covered several of the hills with plantations of fir. We find this a dirty old town in a low situation. Some ancient building in the market-place, has lately been pulled down: That which is rearing in its stead, will be a considerable improvement, and give this spacious area a regular and handsome appear-

ance. The whole town, I believe, is built of stone.

A manufacture, which keeps at work no fewer than two hundred looms, in the weaving of table cloths, and also some finer sorts of linen, is in a flourishing state, and gives life to the town. These articles find a ready market at Aberdeen.

THE old castle of Huntley, a mile from the town, is a venerable ruin, seated on elevated ground, commanding very agreeably the hills around, which the Duke of Gordon's plantations greatly adorn. On the south side of the castle, beneath a turret rising above the gate of entrance is inscribed, in large letters—George I. Marquis of Huntley, Henrietta, Marchioness of Huntley.

Inverury, Sept. 16.

FROM Huntley to this place, our ride, of one and twenty miles, has been pleasant enough, through a country varied with gently rising hills, and scattered plantations of fir. Here and there the ruins of some antient castle

the gave a melancholy air of departed grandeur to its vicinity. The face of the country is more characteristically marked by tillage than by pasture; but the graziers seem not to have been inattentive to their department; as their black cattle, larger than we long met with, have the appearance of an improved breed. Harvest is but just begun; though the weather is so cold, that we found a good deal of ice on our road. Just before we enter Inverury, we pass the house of the Earl of Kintore, which possesses the advantages of wood and water; if, indeed, there be not a little too much of the latter. Its site is low, like that of the town, which stands at the confluence of two rivers, the Ury and the Don. Inverury, though a small place, is a royal borough, and that of great antiquity. A provost, a dean of guild, bailiffs, a treasurer, and counsellors manage its corporate concerns; a body which should seem quite sufficient for the purpose, as the population of the place does not amount to an hundred families. The borough is said to have derived its original privileges from Robert Bruce, who gained his first victory in its neighbourhood,

over the forces of Edward I. The good fortune which marked the progress of his arms, from the time of this event, rendered him partial to Inverury; but it does not appear that the smiles of royalty, not even those of Mary Stuart*, have ever been able to render it flourishing, or very considerable. It has no trade, nor any manufactures; as the work of a few common craftsmen, occupied on the immediate business of the inhabitants, will not claim that title. Most of the families possess some small portion of land, which each cultivates for its own use. It derives some benefit from the passage of travellers; as being situated on the nearest of the roads from Inverness to Aberdeen. But till the erection of the new bridge, under the auspices of the Earl of Kintore, the way through Inverury was often rendered impracticable by the united inundations of the two rivers. The bridge has been thrown over the Don, at a considerable expence, and in all respects does credit to the place. There is a tolerable inn at Inverury, which our host tells us, in the words of Bobadil, is frequently a scene

* She renewed its charter.

of some "rant and roar" in the summer and in the autumn, when resorted to by parties of gentlemen from Aberdeen and other places, who meet here for the diversion of fishing and shooting.

OUR road to Aberdeen from Inverury, lying, for the four last miles, among wooded hills, was very pleasant. Two lofty pinnacles or spires, rising from the church of old Aberdeen, all the way in view, seen more or less, and in varying perspective according to our change of ground, without a particle of any other edifice, till we descended into the town, kept the imagination in amusing suspense for an hour before our arrival. On our nearer approach to Aberdeen, and from an elevated part of the road, we caught a bird's-eye view of a deep and beautiful meadow, watered by the Don, and hemmed in on all sides by hanging cliffs, fringed with wood; a scene which we should have thought more than commonly picturesque and engaging, had it not partly served the disenchanted purpose of a print-field.

THE new town of Aberdeen is somewhat irregularly built on the side of a hill, and partly on a plain, just above the level of the sea. The Broad-gate street, which traverses the city nearly from the summit to the bottom of the hill, is handsomely built, is of considerable width, entirely strait, and paved with flag-stones. There are other elegant streets of later date, which contribute much to the embellishment of the place. But the boast of new Aberdeen is the harbour, at the mouth of the Dee; which, at high water, admits trading ships of the greatest burthen. It is defended by a very fine pier of stone, which, reckoning its length with that of the quay, extends nearly a mile. The width of the quay, fronted by a row of modern houses, and those extremely well built, gives a pleasant, and, indeed, an imposing air to that side of the town, situated towards the sea.

THE church of St. Nicholas is an antient structure, and serves for two places of worship, by an œconomical partition running across it. If this parsimony of space for public worship, so frequently met with in Scotland, be compensated

penfated by the liberal facrifices of the heart, in a degree inverfely proportionate, (and who can tell but that Being, to whom they are offered) happy are the people that are fuch a cafe ! That portion of St. Nicholas's church, where the Provost and Bailiffs of the town attend divine fervice, is very neatly fitted up ; a canopy of mahogany, with arm chairs on either fide of the Provost's feat, diftinguifhes their place from that of the reft of the audience.

WE were fhewn a beautiful monument, by Bacon, erected to the memory of Mrs. Allerdice. The allegorical figures of piety and benevolence, placed on either fide of a feftooned urn, represent the character of the deceased. The figures beneath the urn, fuppofed, of courfe, to contain the afhes, are happily conceived. They are weeping over the infant, whole birth proved fatal to this much lamented mother. The figures are in white marble, upon a black ground of the fame matter. The execution of the whole derogates,

gates, in no respect, from the reputation of the artist.

OPPOSITE to this marble is a monumental tablet of brass, engraven with effigies of Liddel, formerly professor of mathematics in the university of Aberdeen. The figure is full of character, and admirably executed in other respects. I am sorry I omitted to transcribe a Latin inscription beneath it, importing, among other particulars, the high estimation in which he was held with regard to the science he professed. I was the less anxious about it at the moment of inspection, because I had somewhere met with memoirs of biography relative to him; to which I flattered myself I could readily refer; but I have since searched for them without success.

FROM this church we went to Gordon's hospital, consisting of an infirmary and a school for sixty boys. It is a large and commodious edifice, with a spacious garden and a bowling-green for the use and amusement of the scholars. In the council room, where the governors or trustees of the foundation assemble,

we

we met with a little manuel of regulations; in which the food for every meal for each day of the week, and that to be repeated every week in the year, is minutely prescribed for the boys of the school. A diet more simple can scarcely be conceived: Animal food is seldom permitted: bread, milk, oats, barley-meal, and vegetables, with some little change in the mode of preparation, constitute the chief part of every day's bill of fare. The quantity too is fixed within bounds of moderation. The habitual temperance observed here, must be favourable to the best exertions of the mind. "*Mens sana in corpore sano*," is, perhaps, no where more happily exemplified, than in the natives of Scotland; an advantage which they will probably enjoy, as long temperance and hardy discipline continue the general character of their schools.

OUR next visit was to the Trinity Friars, an establishment resembling that of the Charterhouse, in London, in respect of its provision for decayed tradesmen. The greater part of the building, particularly the chapel, is very antique. In the council-room belonging to
this.

this house, the seven chartered companies of Aberdeen hold their courts and ordinary meetings. The room is adorned with the portraits of eminent persons, among which we saw that of William the Lion, king of Scotland, who died at the beginning of the 13th century *. This brave and generous prince was used to retire, occasionally, to this convent, and, abstracted from the world, to give a portion of his time to prayer and devout contemplation. Toward the latter part of his long reign, for he possessed the throne of Scotland forty-nine years, Richard I. Cour de Lion, succeeded to that of England. These princes resembled each other in that generosity and heroism, which had gained to each, in that age of chivalry, a similar surname. And Buchanan, after mentioning William's congratulatory visit, and present to the King of England, upon his return home, after his crusade and imprisonment, observes, that the two kingdoms were never more attached to each other than during the contemporary period of their reigns †.

* In the year 1214.

† Nec unquam nomenoticum creditur Anglico fuisse conjunctius. Lib. VII. p. 26.

THE university of Aberdeen has two colleges; one of them founded by Earl Marischal in 1593, and situated in the new town. This is a plain and gloomy looking building, with a small court in front, and contains the library, a large hall, and different lecture-rooms, with repositories for the philosophical apparatus, and a small collection of minerals, and other articles of natural history. There are also apartments for some of the professors, of whom are eight upon this establishment, who give lectures in the sessions: About 150 students retain to it at present. In the library a beautiful Latin manuscript was shewn us of a work by Leonard Aretin*, on some part of Aristotle. I need not acquaint you that the university boasts the author of the Minstrel among the actual professors of the Marischal College. The members of an acade-

* This was not the famous satirist of crowned heads. His christian name was Peters Leonard Aretin, was, born, however, at Arezzo, the birth-place of the former; but it was 160 years before him. He was Secretary of Briefs to Pope Innocent VII. and to four of his successors. He was a friend of Poggius, and much distinguished among the literati of his time.

mical institution may often have reason to be proud of their college: Such, as unite the genius and talents of this professor, will find their college not less proud of its members.

THE King's College in the Old Town, founded by Bishop Elphinstone, a hundred years before the Marischal College, has considerably the advantage of the latter in point of building, and magnitude. The summit of its antient tower, adorned with cross diadems, like the upper part of our regal crowns, has a singular appearance. This ornament, as well as its name, was meant to denote the royal patronage * under which the college was established.

THE library, a handsome and spacious room, has a good collection of books, arranged, to the eye at least, in a convenient manner. I wished to have found here, Auditor Benson's edition of Dr. Arthur Johnson's Psalms †, on the plan of the Delphin classics,

* That of James IV.

† This elegant paraphrase was chiefly written at the instance of Archb. Laud, by whose interest, probably, Dr. Johnson was made physician to Charles I. See Anecdotes of Bowyer, by Nichols, p. 152.

and

and “ a comparifon of his tranflation with Buchanan’s,” published the fame year, 1741; but I met with neither.

THE librarian, you may be fure, would not fail to point out the fine Glasgow editions of Homer and Virgil. The Vatican manufcript of Virgil, printed as a “ fac fimile,” was put into our hands. The infpection of Anderfon’s book of the “ Diplomata & Numifmata Scotiæ,” afforded us entertainment: The mark of King Duncan *, in the form of a crofs, fet to a charter of certain lands, granted by him to St. Cuthbert’s, in Edinburgh, drew our notice. His majefty’s mark being authenticated by a number of his courtiers, who were able to write fhews, that the royal example had not made that acquifi-

* It was Duncan II. who came to the throne, 1094, whom Buchanan calls—“ Homo militaris, et artium pacis non admodum ignarus, Lib. VII. 118. It appears from this charter, the original of which is among the archives of the church of Durham, that Duncan, although he was a baftard, affirms, that he was king of the Scots by *inberitance*. “ Se hære ditarie Scotorum regem conftare affirmat. Annot. ad Buchan. Hift p. 422.

tion disgraceful, nor even unfashionable. In this instance, the maxim

Regis ad exemplar totus componitur orbis,

was by no means applicable; though it proves frequently so, where royal example least deserves imitation. And can Britons of this time help triumphing in the reflection, that the general manners of the kingdom could, in no reign prior to the present, so happily have taken their bias from the throne?

I have, in a former letter, taken notice of the sudden and violent transitions with which a traveller's letter is liable to surprise his reader; and if I lead you from the last topic to the ornaments of a public fountain, the next article in my minutes, you will take it for granted, that I am verifying my observation, till I acquaint you, that a number of heads of Scottish and English monarchs, not ill sculptured in bas-relief, adorn this structure; a large octagon reservoir of spring water, for the use of the town. The market-place, a very spacious area, in which this object met
our

our curiosity, receives embellishment likewise from the town-house, in the center of which rises a handsome spire; from the new hotel, and many good modern houses, to which the inhabitants are joining other additional beauties. This place you will naturally suppose the liveliest scene of the town.

THE population of the new, and the old city together, is thought to amount nearly to twenty thousand souls: that is, twenty thousand more than are to be found in all the population of France; twenty-five millions of souls having * lately been there annihilated by order of the convention. Heaven preserve those of his majesty's subjects from the legerdemain of republican philosophy!

ABERDEEN owes its considerable and increasing number of inhabitants to a very flourishing trade, and manufactures connected with it; for both which, particularly the

* This alludes to the inscription of "La mort, un sommeil éternel," placed over the cœmeteries of France, by order of the convention. Although this had not been done at the time of my tour, the anachronism will, perhaps, be pardoned.

former, it is happily situated. Vessels from this port are engaged in exporting its manufactures to Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, as well as to France, Spain, and other southern parts of Europe. Its exports consist of thread, linen, and woollen stockings, both knit and woven, to a great amount, together with those of silk and cotton. The manufacture of paper, for which two mills have been erected, supplies another article of commerce.

IN the latter part of the summer, the whale-fishery, carried on from this place at Davis's Straits, causes a good deal of movement. Three vessels sent thither this summer, brought home five whales; reckoned, I believe, upon the whole, a successful capture.—Struck by the odd appearance of plates, as they are called, of whale-bone, like a black grove waving to and fro in the wind, we were imperceptibly drawn toward the Strand; the scene of those operations, which the blubber undergoes, as soon as the vessels arrive in port. As a description of the boiling-house might prove a little too unctuous
for

for a literary stomach, I will not desire you to peep into it ; though we ourselves unsuspiciously ventured. You will be satisfied with observing almost an acre of ground behind it, covered with butts for the reception of the oil ; enough to give you some idea of the scale on which the business is managed at Aberdeen. A sturdy little tar, whom we met with here, who had made several voyages in this fishery, and whose manners and discourse we found above the scene of his life, explained to us, very intelligently, the different machines concerned in extracting the oil, and in splitting, scraping, and drying the whalebone. The fat of a large whale will sometimes produce thirty or forty butts of oil ; and upwards of a thousand plates, or blades of split whalebone, from twelve to fourteen or fifteen feet long, and eight or ten inches broad, are often furnished by the jaws and gills ; the whole of this article coming, as we understood, from the head of the fish.—Our sailor shewed us some of the harpoons or bearded iron javelins, generally five or six feet long, with which the whale is killed ; and

concluded with a lively account of the manœuvres used in making the capture. When the ships, said he, are arrived at their station in the month of May, and are moored by our nose-hooks to the ice, the captain or commodore of every vessel orders out his boat of observation, each manned by six or seven sailors, in quest of the fish. As soon as we hear the whale blow, all join in the cry of fall ! fall ! when instantly one boat, or more, is let down from each ship with its complement of men, their lances and necessary tackle. All row after the fish with the utmost speed they can, till they approach near enough for the harpooner to strike him with all his might, in some more soft and vulnerable part near the spout ; having first inserted his harpoon in a wooden staff of some length, the more easily to reach the fish : some of our boats now close about that of the harpooner, to join their lines to his, which is fixed to the staff of the harpoon. The wounded fish rapidly plunges, or runs out into the sea, after drawing our lines to the distance of a hundred fathom. The other boats row away to that

quar-

quarter, where, from the direction of the line, they guess the whale will rise again; or, if he keep on the surface, where they may meet him, now sufficiently weakened with effusion of blood, to suffer the more deliberate attack of spears and lances to compleat our conquest.

As we were leaving this place, the sailor desired us to take notice of a canoe, which one of the whale-ships had brought from Davis's Straits; not for any particular difference we should find in its texture, from those which are shewn in every museum, but on account of a seal-skin covering or jacket, attached to the aperture in the middle of the canoe, where the Indian sits to row or paddle. As soon as he is seated, he draws up the skin all round him under the arms, and fixes the top of it so closely to his garment, all water-proof, that no sea can possibly enter betwixt that and his own dress; nor can it penetrate any of the seams. "Thus accoutred," says our tar, "I have often seen these savages dexterously making their way through the roughest

water in a brisk gale, and, though frequently overfet, recovering their proper position with the greatest ease, and at length arriving safe and undismayed to shore.

SOME of the exhaustless quarries of granite, used in the pavement of London, and many towns both in England and Scotland, are in this neighbourhood. The produce of them lying in vast heaps, occupies a good deal of space on the quay, and finds employment for numerous hands, and many thousand tons of shipping.

IN the extensive walk, which we have been taking on the quay, the pier, and the strand, where so many sea-faring men, and numberless others of, the lower order, were employed in their several vocations, it was, with pleasure, we observed, that most of them could go through all the different operations of their craft, exert their vigour or address, call out for assistance or dispatch, and extricate themselves from any little difficulties or dangers, which might attend their employment,

ment, and even express emotions of occasional surprise, without the shocking and useless indecency of oaths and imprecations. A man here could handle a sail or an oar, without cursing his heart, b—st—g his eyes, or wishing them to drop into his hat; he could twist a cable, or split a whalebone, without once asking the devil to take him; and could hang a bale of goods upon a crane, or remove it, without damning either his own soul, or that of his neighbour to the lowest pit of hell: So that there seems to be no necessary connexion between business and profaneness. As little, indeed, might naturally be expected betwixt common conversation and profane swearing. It would not be justice to the people of Scotland in general, to suppress an opinion, which we have hitherto formed, that they are much less addicted to this irreverent practice, than the inhabitants of many other countries.

INDEED this vulgar and blustering effusion of profaneness is elsewhere found to be so extensively prevalent, that an ingenious divine,
in

in his endeavours, by some means to account for it, might well ask, “ Whether it were a passion, an appetite, or an instinct; or whether a man might be born with a swearing constitution?”

N. B. The life of Elphinstone, bishop of Aberdeen, was to have been placed here.



LETTER

L E T T E R XXIII.

Dundee, Sept. 20, 1792.

WHEN we had got about 2 miles southward of Aberdeen, we were much struck with the beauty of the “coup d’œil” which was presented to us on looking back upon the city, from a hill we were ascending. We were now travelling in a country agreeably varied with hill and dale, abounding with corn and pasture intermixed, and inhabited, apparently, by a sober and industrious peasantry. Their implements of husbandry have a neat and improved appearance. We dined at Stonehaven, (Sept. 18,) a small town on the sea-side. It has a harbour of convenient compass, formed and defended by a pier. Those of its vessels, which are not employed in a coasting trade to London, are chiefly occupied in importing lime-stone from Leith, for the manure of the lands in this quarter. A good deal of flax is spun here by the female inhabitants. With these, and probably

bly other resources, the poorer people seem to procure a comfortable subsistence, and the order above them to be not ill at their ease. The same face of country, as that in our morning's ride, continued to Bervie; another little town, where we halted for the night. The drum was beating, just at our arrival, to set the manufacturers at liberty from their looms. This martial instrument is much in use among the North Britons for such purposes, and others equally unconnected with war. The town-criers commonly announce their intelligence to the public, after having assembled their auditors, by beat of drum. On various parts of our route from Aberdeen, we saw plantations of wood about farms, villages, and gentlemen's houses, vigorously contradicting Dr. Johnson's assertion, who says there were no trees from——— to Bamf, fifty miles distant. The whole quantity is certainly much less than would be sufficient to denominate this a woody country; much less too than might, perhaps, be desirable either for beauty or profit; but enough to prove the assertion to have originated in something like a resolute prejudice, had not the

the Doctor's sight been remarkably bad, or that he might possibly have travelled in the night. The greater part had no appearance of having been planted since his tour; only twenty years ago. The farm-houses and cottages, which we met with, are not inferior to those even of South Britain; and our road was rendered highly pleasant by continual views of the sea.

Aberbrothick, Sept. 19.

WE set out this morning under a lowering sky; but the pleasantness of the way, in the stile of yesterday's journey, compensated for the absence of sunshine. Abundant crops of barley, oats, and beans, almost every where ripe, wanted nothing but settled weather to anticipate a joyful harvest. Coming early before noon to Montrose, we allowed ourselves time to walk over this well-built and respectable town; situated upon the estuary of the Esk, which, at high water, nearly surrounds it: but I should not forget to mention that, at about three miles northward, we had crossed a handsome bridge, very lately finished, and erected at a considerable expence for the
benefit

benefit of this place; jointly by royal bounty, and a subscription of the town and its vicinity. Montrose has a neat pier, and semi-circular harbour. It partakes in the whale-fishery with all the larger sea-ports of Scotland. The salmon fishery of the Esk is also a valuable object of its trade; not to mention those, which originate in its different looms and fabrics. The manufactures of linen, thread, and sail-cloths, a bleachery, and the making of malt give constant employment to those of the inhabitants, not engaged on the water.

THERE is, near the town, a large nursery of forest trees, hardy exotics, &c. in which we may predict the future embellishment of a country, at present in possession of many lucrative resources, daily contributing to its more solid comfort and prosperity. The country improves in richness of aspect, as we proceed towards Aberbrothick. It is, hereabouts, chiefly inclosed, as in England. Villages of some magnitude, gentlemen's seats and plantations, frequently occur. This town, a royal borough, shortly pronounced Arbroath,

Arbroath, is somewhat irregularly built; but charmingly situated. Till within these last fifty years, it seems to have been neglected, and without consequence, since the dissolution of its famous abbey. The town must formerly have derived importance from its vicinity to, and connection with that grand monastic establishment. The harbour, which was made and maintained at the joint expence of the abbot and the burghers, was probably, in antient times, one of the most considerable on the eastern coast of Scotland. The monastery, one of the richest in the whole island, frequently entertained the kings of Scotland; its hospitality and charity were very extensive. Its abbots were often the first churchmen in the kingdom. Cardinal Beaton, the Wolsey of Scotland, was the last, who held this preferment, and that with the archbishopric of St. Andrews. Mr. Pennant informs us, though not upon what occasion, or at what period of his reign, “ that king John, the English monarch, granted to this monastery, the most uncommon privileges, under his great seal. He exempted it *à teloniis et consuetudine*, in every part of England, except

cept London*." Not long after the death of Cardinal Beaton, its magnificence felt the destructive fanaticism of John Knox. The ruins are singularly striking and picturesque, consisting, it is needless to say, of broken towers, arches, stair-cases, a gothic cloyster, a grand gateway, &c. These are the relics of the church, which now chiefly remain. Mr. Pennant having well described its form and dimensions, and entered into several particulars relative to its foundation and history, I must, not to repeat his observations, refer you to them. He has, however, taken no notice of a circumstance or two, which, as they tend to shew the great change which this noble edifice has undergone, we thought not unworthy of remark. The ground, by the

* It was not improbably, at the time when William the Lion, king of Scotland, the founder of this monastery, had consented to the espousals of his daughters Margaret and Isabel with John's sons, Henry and Richard; when they were, according to Smollet, sent to England with 15000 marks, by way of portion, and the Scottish king had agreed to pay fealty and homage to John, for certain lands south of the Tweed. This seems to be the only juncture during their contemporary reigns, when the Scottish king was likely to have demanded such privileges, or John to have been disposed to grant them.

successive

ſucceſſive falls, and mouldering of various parts of the ruin, is raiſed ten or twelve feet high, within ſome of the walls. Soil has been furniſhed by deſign, or by the accidental crumbling of the materials ; and a pretty garden now occupies a great hall of the abbey with fruit trees, bowers of honey-ſuckle, and the luxuriant foliage of different ſhrubs. Within the nave of the church, is, at preſent, a flouriſhing grove of aſh-trees. For the ſake of viewing the environs of Arbroath, to the beſt advantage, we aſcended a crazy old ladder, not without ſome hazard, and mounted a maſſive and lofty wall, from whence we ſurveyed, at our eaſe, that beautiful amphitheatre of hills in which the town is ſituated, the ſea on its ſouthern-ſide, with a reach of country extending to the elevated parts of Fifeshire and Lothian, and the grand paſſages at which the Forth and the Tay enter the eaſtern ſea ; the view terminating northward in the Grampian hills.

THE proſperity of this borough after it had, for a long courſe of years, ſhared the fate of its princely abbey, began, ſomewhat

F f

before

before the middle of the present century, to revive. Some gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood entered into the scheme of raising a fund for the establishment of a linen manufacture. They imported flax from the Baltic, and providing the requisite machinery, set a number of hands to work on a sort of brown linens, called Osnaburghs. In this species of fabric, the weavers of Arbroath are said to have long since acquired, and still to retain, a superiority over all their competitors. A vast quantity of sail-cloth also, excellent in its kind, is made here. Of these articles together the inhabitants exported, one year, not less than two millions of yards, and nearly the same quantity of each, and that, principally, to the London market. They have other manufactures of linen; particularly a sort used for the linings of carriages, which succeeds well. Beside the importation of raw materials for their fabrics, and the exportation of their linen and sail-cloth, their trade in lime and coals, for the use and consumption of all the neighbourhood, employs a number of vessels and brings wealth to the place.

THE harbour is defended by a battery, mounting six twelve pounders, erected a few years ago at the expence of the town and the adjacent country. An engineer was sent down for the purpose by government. An account, which I have heard of the circumstances that made this defence necessary, is too curious not to be worthy of notice. Toward the latter end of the late war, a Dunkirk privateer, commanded by one Fall, probably born of some British refugee smuggler, anchored in the bay of Arbroath. The name of his vessel was the Fearnought; a character which the captain himself maintained upon that occasion, as long as there was nothing to fear. After firing a few shots into the town, he dispatched a flag of truce with a letter, written in bad English to the inhabitants, requiring them to send the mayor, and principal persons of the town to make "what he called some agreement with him," which, if they failed doing in a quarter of an hour, he should "*make* his duty and set the town on fire," concluding his letter with "it is the will of yours."—What dignity!

THE town being destitute of military defence, the magistrates had no other part to act than to send an indirect answer to the captain's epistle; observing, that he had mentioned no terms of ransom, and requesting him not to proceed to violent measures, till he heard from them again. Time was precious, and a little being thus gained, expresses were immediately sent to the nearest towns, whence some small force might be procured. A short space only elapsed, before the Captain communicated his terms in a second epistle. He modestly demanded 30,000l. sterling, at least, and six of the chiefs of the town as hostages for the payment. "Be speedy," says he, "or I shoot your town away directly, and I set fire to it." His postscript menaces hanging at the main-yard to all the *presoners* aboard, if harm should happen to the messengers whom he had sent ashore. An answer was delayed till some of the inhabitants could be armed, and a party of the soldiers had marched in from Montrose. The magistrates then acquainted Captain Fall, that he might do his worst; for they would not give him a farthing. At this disappointment

appointment the Captain's wrath, you may be sure, was raised to a dreadful pitch: his guns were immediately played upon the town, and a heavy fire kept up for a considerable time. This having, however, little more effect than the demolishing of some chimney-tops, he conveyed a third letter to the town by some Scottish sailors whom he had captured at sea, threatening, "to come presently with his cutter into the *arbour*, and to cast down the town all over." He desires them to make haste; because he has no time to spare. They were once more graciously allowed a quarter of an hour to decide in; and if not in his favour, at the expiration of it, he would "*make his duty*."

THE only answer thought necessary to this last insult, was a verbal message, desiring his company ashore, and hoisting a flag of defiance on the Ballast Hill; the situation of the new battery. This produced a little more fruitless firing; after which the hero thought proper to sheer off with his Fearnought *.

* The whole of this transaction passed on the 23d and 24th of May, 1781. See Sinclair's statistical account, under

THE country, as we proceeded, southward grew more inclosed with hedge-rows, in the manner of England. A great deal of wheat, not to mention abundance of most kinds of corn, gave proofs of the prosperous state of agriculture, and most of the villages and farm-houses are pleasantly sheltered by wood. We passed Lord Panmure's park, on our right, and caught a view of the house, which, however, we had not time to visit. Among its ornaments travellers have spoken of the portraits with distinction. The ground, which appears to take a large compass, is walled round, as the parks in Scotland are more commonly than with us. Some quarters of it exhibited a great deal of fine forest-wood; the open parts were grazed by numerous herds of black cattle, and horses; and groups of deer were ranging the forest; the whole a very lively scene. We still commanded the sea-view almost all the way on our left; only intercepted, here and there, by rising ground; as if to give the prospect more agreeable variety.

article Arbroath, vol. 7. for Captain Fall's three curious letters entire, and some other particulars.

riety.

riety. But after some time, the coast turns, suddenly, short towards the west; rising into beautiful eminences, which form the higher shore of the Firth of Tay. Having been amused with its delicious scenery, as much as a bad road would allow, we turned round on our left into lower ground, where a brilliant prospect of the town of Dundee, stretched out on the northern coast of the estuary, with a large range of lovely country on either side, very agreeably surprised us. What the town lost in that air of splendor and elegance, which struck us as we approached it, it gained on our entering it, in the important throng and movement of business. The streets, and the great area before the Town House were full of people. A number of travellers carriages stood before the principal inns, or were driving through the town. Almost every person we saw had the appearance of engagement or occupation, and yet we could not learn, that there was any thing particular in the occasion. Various manufactures are established here; the more flourishing of them of the same kind as at Arbroath. These, united with its commerce, but on a much larger

scale, principally excite that activity of spirit, which marked the more public quarters of the town. A fabric of coarse woollen cloths, newly commencing, under the firm of Vancouvre, and Co. raises expectations of its becoming one of the most important branches of business in the place. The harbour of Dundee has undergone great improvement since its original construction, and is capacious enough to contain, at least, two hundred sail. The warehouses, on the quay, are of great dimensions, and handsomely built. Though the town is not regular, it is full of good houses; and the more modern ones are very neat. The Town House and the new church, among the public edifices, are deservedly recommended to the notice of strangers. The latter was planned by the father of the Adamsons, whose architecture, at present, contributes so much to the embellishment of our capital. The former is a great ornament to the Market Square; having its pediment in front, and a spacious piazza, adorned with columns for the merchants exchange.

THE decoration, most valued within, is a portrait of George Demster, Esq. so well known for the important part he has taken in the establishment of fisheries on the north-western coasts of Scotland and the Hebrides; with a view, among other advantages, to prevent emigrations, which had been gaining in this part of the kingdom. This gentleman, who represents the borough of Dundee, with others united in that district *, was, we have been informed, the first, who suggested in parliament the annual appropriation of one million of the surplus of the revenue towards the payment of the national debt; and among the foremost of those, who promoted a revision of our revenue laws, and a system better adapted to the ease and convenience of our commercial citizens. If, after more than thirty years patriotic services, Mr. Demster has, as we hear, taken the resolution of retiring, for the rest of his life, to cultivate and improve his paternal estate, he does it now with a good grace; and his constituents will, undoubtedly, wish him all the satisfaction he

* Perth, St. Andrews, Cupar, and Forfar.

can enjoy in the laudable schemes of inclosing and planting his fields, draining a lake, and building a village. There should seem, in this kind of secession, more of the dignitas than the otium of rural retirement ; a state of activity, well suited to a mind which had made exertion long habitual, and which means only to exchange the cares of public, for those of private life.

The great gothic tower of Dundee, the principal reliet of the antient church, is a magnificent object, and wonderfully aids the fine approach to the town. It was founded by David, brother of William the Lion, in consequence of a vow to God upon his escape from shipwreck, and many other misfortunes* and hardships attending the crusade, in which he had engaged with Richard of England.

* Is dum redit, classe tempestibus disjecti, ab Ægyptiis captus, Venetis redemptus, Constantinopoli demum ab Anglo mercatore agnitus, post quartum tandem annum in Scotiam rediit.—Boethius credit, ab hoc Davide, incolumi illic expofito oppidum, quod Aleetum antè vocabatur, appellatum fuiffe Deidunam *Dundee*. Buchanan, Lib. VII. 126.

You would wonder, whence resources for two such splendid monuments of pious enthusiasm, as those at Arbroath and Dundee, founded so near each other, and in the same reign, could possibly be drawn; till I mention, that, according to Mr. Pennant, "David obtained a mandate from the Pope, still to be seen in the Vatican, recommending, to assist in the expence, a collection throughout Christendom."

N.B. The life of Henry Scrimgeon of Dudhope in this vicinity, a profound critic and civilian, the friend and rival of Casaubon and Henry Stephens, was to have made the subject of the next letter.



LETTER

L E T T E R XXIV.

Dumfermline, Sept. 22, 1792.

AS we left Dundee yesterday morning, we were delighted with the neat houses, which we passed in the outer parts of the town. Our progress commanded a large expanse of the Tay, and its variegated shores on either side, abounding in the richest cultivation. Different parts of the scenery were now put into motion by the commencing harvest. The ground presently began to rise, and, by degrees, the estuary became intercepted from our view for the space of four or five miles.

Its appearance, when it met us again, was under the form of a beautiful river, to which the ruins of an antient castle, on the further bank, gave additional interest. The scene soon narrows into a valley, with cultivated hills on the southern side of the water; on the north runs a ledge of high rocks, perpendicular,

dicular, and naked in some parts; in others, bulging almost over our road, but covered with wood. Both the river and the vale, through which it winds, grew more contracted in their dimensions, till, upon an unexpected turn round the rocks, the whole scale of land and water became much enlarged, and the noble town of Perth, with its harbour, shipping, and elegant environs, at no great distance, came suddenly into view. Near this point it probably was, if the tradition be founded, that the Roman army, on its march to Bertha, the old city of Perth, saluted the Tay with their exclamation of “Ecce Tyberim!” a comparison, as far as the colour of the two streams is taken into account, much to the advantage of the Tay, which, unless in great inundations, keeps a clear transparent course to the sea. The poet *, you know, says of the Tyber,

*Vorticulus rapidis et multâ flavus arenâ
In mare prorumpit.——*

* ————— Tyber’s glitt’ring floods,
With circling whirlpools urge their winding ways,
And lead their yellow waters to the sea. Æn. VII.

and

and you, who have often seen it, must recollect that, in all seasons, it bears the same yellow tint. In prose, the Tyber would be called muddy. In point of fulness and depth, another great beauty of the Tay, the comparison is not less unfavourable to the Tyber, except for one half of the year. You will, perhaps, judge my reference to the authority of Pliny almost needless. He, speaking of it as an object in his Tusculan villa, says: *Nævium patiens æstate duntaxat, et vere; hyeme summittitur immensique fluminis nomen, arenti alveo, deserit, autumnno resumit* *.

THE Tay too, I believe, boasts, on the whole, a greater breadth of channel than the Tyber. The fair conclusion seems to be, that the Romans have paid the Tyber a flat-

* Lib. 5. Ep. 6. "Navigable only in winter and spring, it grows shallow in summer, and leaving its channel almost dry, abandons all pretensions to the name of a considerable river, which it begins to reclaim in the autumn." If Pliny means here, by *immedi*, more than the word *considerable* imports, I cannot conjecture what, from any thing I know of the Tyber; as he appears rather to be giving its general character in one of the seasons, than its peculiar appearance under the short intervals of inundation.

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tering compliment. The Tay, however, like other beauties, has been sometimes accused of causing very serious mischiefs in transgressing due bounds. The bridges of Perth, have been, at different times, demolished, or swept away by extraordinary floods; the town and adjacent country at the same time suffering alarm, and often devastation. But the most fatal of these disasters happened towards the end of the reign of William the Lion, just then returned to his capital in the decline of life, in hopes, doubtless, of enjoying the remainder of a long and troubled reign in that peace, which he had at length established.

THE greatest part of the city was overthrown in the night, by a sudden inundation of the Tay. The king's palace shared this calamity: His infant son, with his nurse, and fourteen other persons lost their lives: The rest of its inhabitants, with difficulty, escaped. The waters having covered the whole site of the town, hardly a single habitation remained unhurt. The city was rebuilt under the auspices of William, in a more convenient situation, a little lower
down

down on the same river *. According to Camden †, it very soon became rich and flourishing, and as long as it continued a royal residence, was probably considered as the capital of the realm; but it was no more than poetically true, that, according to his bard quoted below, that its riches supported the kingdom.

WE entered the town by an elegant new bridge of nine arches; over which it was impossible to pass, without stopping to contemplate, towards the right side, villas, gardens, and lofty rocks, all beautifully covered with wood on one shore, reflected in the water; the bright green meadows in sweet succession on the opposite one, with the Highland hills

* Vide Buchanan, Lib. VII. 127.

† Camden on the article Perth, says: Pergit hinc Taus per Cadaver desolatæ urbeculæ Berthæ; pro qua, commodiore situ, rex Gulielmus Pertham extruxit, quæ statim adeo fuit opulenta, ut, qui eo sæculo vixit, Nechamus de eâ cecinit—

Transis, ample Tai, per rura, per oppida, per Perth;

Regnum sustentant istius urbis opes.

Fiction may sometimes recommend poetry: nothing but plain truth, or at least, its appearance, could make this passable; and for this, Camden, we may suppose, gave it the credit of quotation.

and

and mountains, rising one behind another, and closing the distance in the clouds. These objects, with the shipping on the river, in its various movements, or positions of business, and two streets of the town opening handsomely at angles in front of the bridge, formed altogether, under a bright autumnal day, no unworthy accompaniments of the delightful scenery first described. The left hand street from the bridge introduces the traveller very advantageously into the lower part of the town. It runs a very considerable length on the strand of the Tay. At right angles to this street, and opening finely into it, are two others of noble breadth, and each near half a mile long. The first of these is the principal street of Perth, and is full of lofty, well-built houses; and its perspective, when seen at the bottom of that which we first entered, is particularly striking, and of grand effect. This is occupied by the chief inhabitants; the merchants and manufacturers of the place. The other great street running parallel, has little to commend, but that it is wide and rectilinear; the houses being irregularly built, and, in general, mean. The

place altogether is large and populous: one part of its inhabitants is employed in the manufacture of linen to a great extent; another in exporting corn, particularly wheat and barley, of which they send great supplies to Edinburgh; a third, in the fishery and curing of salmon, which they export in vast quantities, every season, to the London markets, and to those of their own capital.

IT is considered as the duty of every traveller, to visit Gowry-house; the scene of the famous conspiracy against James VI. He must look through the wonderful window, from which his majesty's cries of treason! treason! help! I am murdered! alarmed his attendants, who rescued him from the menacing appearance of assassination,

MANY persons have thought so highly of the ingenuity of the late historiographer's reasoning upon this subject, as to have made it a fashion to see nothing but mystery in this whole transaction; even in the part which the king himself bore in it. Whilst Dr. Robertson doubts the nature of the motives, which
the

the Earl of Gowry and his brother might have had for conspiring against the life of the king, every reader will probably doubt with him; but when, after having stated all the facts and circumstances, in the manner he has done, we find him asserting "that insuperable difficulties arise, and that we are involved in darkness, mystery, and contradictions, whether we impute the intention of murder to Gowrie, or to the king," are you not astonished, that the most distant surmise of an imputation on the king, from any fact or circumstance in the historian's relation, should have entered his own mind, or could be supposed to enter that of any of his readers? All the mystery here, is of the doctor's own making. A phantom is raised to shew how dexterously it might be combated. For there scarce appears a single voluntary, or intentional act on the king's part, through the whole business, except his struggles in his self-defence, and his alarming cries at the study window, to procure his deliverance. In every other movement of the whole day, that was not perfectly indifferent, he was only acted upon. Although the insinuation,

dark as it is, of the king's disagreement with his queen, or her supposed affection for the Earl of Gowrie, were admitted, and the king's jealousy in consequence of it; yet not the shadow of any circumstance in that day's transaction favours the supposition of his intending, or thinking then of the most distant act of revenge. But does not the historian seem as willing to have that supposed, from the passage above cited, as that the Gowries should be suspected of any such intention on their part? That the Gowries either intended to murder the king, or else to deprive him of his liberty, for the political purposes of their party, seems the grand dilemma. If the king's captivity only were their object, still the conspiracy was of a black and heinous nature; and I cannot understand, how the king's earnest efforts, and haste to extricate himself from it, deserves those sneering insinuations to the disadvantage of his courage, with which some writers seem pleased to represent them. Many of the steps, which the king took afterwards to convince the nation, that it was a conspiracy against his life, though they were natural enough

enough for a man in his situation, prove, however, less magnanimity than became the royal character.

FROM any thing in the externals of the town of Perth, we were not led to suppose, that refinement of taste, or luxury in the modes of living or dress, has yet made any remarkable progress among its wealthier inhabitants. Whatever of this nature offered itself to our view, it was in the article of building; in which the opulence of most, perhaps, of all the towns in North Britain, begins first to shew itself to the world. As convenience is generally found to keep pace with elegance in the improvements of architecture, and as few of the refinements of society have duration, more to recommend them, than those of building, the disposition of the Scots, to display their taste in this way, is among the many proofs of that good sense, which I have had frequent opportunity of considering as characteristic of this people. I cannot help mentioning here, that, in a walk which we took to review the bridge, we observed an instance, in which œconomy appears to have held too

strict rein over taste. This elegant structure has been allowed somewhat less width, than conveniently might have been given to it. In consequence of this defect, one side of it only has been paved for foot passengers; nor is it lighted on both. These latter circumstances have a one-ear'd sort of effect, little to the credit of the bridge, and such as its general character has by no means deserved.

PERTH, like all other great towns in North Britain, has its public subscription coffee-house, for the perusal of the periodical public prints; and the study of politics may be reckoned one of the favourite amusements of every order of persons in the town.

ALL the newspapers which we saw there, were those least calculated to advance the spirit of optimism, and not all to exercise impartiality of judgment. This one could not but lament. Whether, therefore, the coffee-house contributes very liberally to the good humour, or political candor of the inhabitants,

tants, must be left for those to determine, who have more acquaintance with them.

IF papers of the same tendency should occupy the chimney-corner of every public-house, I should be inclined to guess, that the bilious and discontented humour of sedentary manufacturers would be more improved by a brisk dance, once or twice a week, to the bagpipe, than by hanging their heads, during their hours of leisure, over the morbid vapours of some factious chronicler.

Kinross, Sept. 22, morning.

ABOUT four miles from Perth, which we left at the dawn of day, having gained the summit of a considerable hill in the tract of our road, we commanded a retrospective view of the whole vale of Tay, with the calm expanse of its waters glittering in the sun rise; and a scene of more rural beauty or richer cultivation had enlivened no former part of our tour. On descending this eminence, a country much less interesting presented itself to us; the villages are thinly

scattered, and our way soon became dreary and unpleasant.

THE sight of Loch-Leven, and of the nakedness of its western shores, which alone fell within our ken, was no very exhilarating object. This town, which gives name to a county, has nothing to distinguish it from a large village. It stands at the western extremity of the lake, and near enough to the little island of Douglass-Castle, for us to contemplate the ruins of that edifice; of which Michael Bruce, a native of this neighbourhood, sings thus:

No more its arches echo to the noise
Of joy and festive mirth: no more the glance
Of blazing taper through its windows beams,
And quivers on the undulating wave:
But naked stand the melancholy walls,
Lash'd by the wint'ry tempests cold and bleak,
That whistle mournful through the empty halls,
And piece-meal crumble down the towers to dust.

A FEW blasted trees, near these ruins, rather increased than lessened the desolation of the scene. A shrivelled old woman, whom I found by accident near my station, on the
margin

margin of the lake, pointed at a part of the building near one of the remaining towers; and saying, with a sigh, "that was queen Mary's prison," left me to my reflections; which were naturally enough carried back to that moment, when this princess, destitute of every friend or counsellor, and under apprehension even for her life, received Lord Lindsay, the fiercest zealot of the triumphant party; who came here with peremptory harshness, to demand her signature to the resignation of her crown, the appointment of a regent, and her renunciation of all future share in the government. "Mary," says Robertson, "when she subscribed these deeds, was bathed in tears; and while she gave away, as it it were, with her own hands, the sceptre, which she had swayed so long, she felt a pang of grief and indignation; one of the severest, perhaps, which can touch the human heart."

SHE passed, in this melancholy confinement, near a twelvemonth. Her genius and accomplishments must, however, after a time have

have created some resources of consolation, which many have wanted in the lingering hours of captivity. Here, it is imagined, she composed, and sung, to the lute, some of those little effusions of lyric poetry, which tradition has attributed to her pen. Here her knowledge of languages might have furnished opportunities of solacing many intervals; and some were beguiled by the elegant employment of her needle. Mr. Pennant, in his account of the palace of Scone, near Perth, mentions his having seen a medley scripture piece, in needle-work, with a border of animals, the performance of Mary Stuart, during her confinement in Loch-Leven Castle. And as education had tinged her mind with religion, it must be conceived, that her spirit derived its strongest support from her reliance on that Being, at whose fiat, a light springs from darkness, good rises out of evil.

THE fortitude of a high spirit like Mary's, with that share of innocence, which historical justice seems, at length, to have rendered her,

was

was not likely to be soon overwhelmed *. A broken heart exists not long in the misery of a prison. Mary's escape, after eleven months confinement, from Loch-Leven Castle gave her but a transient possession of liberty: She had still to suffer eighteen years imprisonment, in different scenes, and under various forms of affliction. Elizabeth, as if she had felt her power defied by her captive's

* It is curious to see the bustle and ferment of a little mind overset by its own reflections on some extraordinary event. Caussin, who wrote the life of Mary Stuart, breaks out, as follows, upon the subject of her imprisonment in Loch-Leven Castle.—“What an indignity was this? And what a confusion in nature and the laws of the world, to behold that excellent lady, to whom grace and nature had given chains to captivate the hearts of the most barbarous; that great princess whom the sun did see almost to be a queen as a living creature; she, that was born to empire, as empire seemed to be made for her, to be deprived of her liberty; to see herself severed from all commerce with mankind; to be banished to an island, where nothing but rocks and waves were to be the witnesses of her sufferings. Nay, which is more, she now became the captive of her own subjects, and a servant to her slaves.”—Could such witless wailing as this come from one capable of manly or useful reflections on the vicissitudes of human life? Had the royal sufferer's mind been cast in no better mould than her Biographer's, she had probably maintained but a short struggle with her misfortunes.

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endurance, recured at last to the scaffold to terminate her life.

I CANNOT quit the ever-interesting name of Mary of Scotland, without expressing a satisfaction, which I am sure I partake with yourself, in those achievements of literary chivalry, which have lately been displayed in defence of her honour. All that can be recovered to the character of a beautiful, but suspected, woman, and of one too, who moved in so exalted a situation, whose example must ever violently operate with the worst, or best influence, is matter of the sincerest triumph to every friend of virtue.

SOME of our travellers talk much of the beauty of Loch-Leven. They probably mean to celebrate the eastern end, or at least some portion of it, which is not to be seen from Kinross. This little town, not being destitute of the accompaniment of wood, may possibly be a pleasing object from the lake itself; but the borders of the water on this side, are in general naked and dreary.

ON

ON the opposite side of the lake toward Fifeshire, where it issues into the river Leven, are still seen some remains of a famous mound* by which the English forces, in one of Edward III's expeditions, stopt the egress of the water, in order to raise the lake to such a height, as to inundate the island of the castle; in which they had for some time in vain besieged the Scots. This scheme appeared slowly tending to its accomplishment, when, in the month of July, a great celebrity being held at Dumfermline, in honour of St. Margaret, the English general, with a considerable part of his men, left their camp in the vicinity of the mound; to assist at the festal ceremonies of the saint. The Scots, aware of their absence, seized the opportunity of failing in the night with a proper apparatus to the mound; which they perforated in various parts so successfully, that the current of the water, rushing through with great violence, quickly overturned the whole. A vast flood instantly ensued, and, spreading far and wide, swept away every thing in its course; tents, magazines, men just awaked from sleep, beasts of burthen, camp equi-

* See an account of this in Buchanan, Lib. IX. p. 259.

page and baggage ; carrying them with a tremendous noise into the sea.

THE trout fishery of this lake, both on account of the abundance and the excellence of that fish, is an object of some consequence to the town of Kinross. The property of the water is rented of Mr. Graham, present member of parliament, for this town, at 100*l.* per annum. Char, which is said to be uncommon in the lakes of Scotland, is found here.

A ROAD dull and dreary to the eye, chiefly lying over peat - mosses, and among coal-pits, with inconsiderable patches of corn here and there, brought us to Dumfermline ; a town more remarkable for its antiquity, than its beauty. The two or three streets of which it consists, are irregularly built on the narrow ridges of as many hills, and a number of small kitchen gardens descending from them down the bottom of a deep narrow glen, give the place a singular, but not a romantic appearance. The lofty scite of the town, however, commands a fine country upon the Firth of Forth, and diverts our sight very
advan-

advantageously from its own walls. The ruins which remain of the royal palace, are sufficient to intimate its ancient grandeur; and the recollection of our Charles I. having there drawn his first breath, excited a train of historical ideas. A part of the antient abbey, where some of the early Scottish monarchs lie buried, forms the parish church of the present day; and a place of more sepulchral gloom we had seldom beheld. We could not help fancying something in the air of the place well calculated to have aided the sullen spirit of predestination, which, it is likely, once prevailed in the doctrines of its pulpit.

You will not wonder, if we were more cheerfully engaged in surveying the town-house, and its lofty square tower. Relievo sculptures of the royal arms of Scotland and England, and also those of the Elgin family neatly executed, are pleasing decorations of this public edifice.

THERE is at Dumfermline, a linen manufacture for the weaving of diapers, which is said to succeed extremely well. To this rising
source

source of wealth, it is probable, that Dumfermline is indebted for its laudable imitation of other prosperous towns of North-Britain, in the commencing improvement of its buildings. But this must make considerable progress, before the present scowling aspect of the place can be generally softened. Some of its features are certainly brightening up: they may smile upon some future traveller.



LETTER

LETTER XXV.

Stirling, Sept. 23, 1792.

AS soon as we had fairly descended all the declivities of our road from Dumfermline, and passed the screen formed by trees and rising ground on our left, the grand estuary of the Forth, with all its towns and villages, amidst cultivation and fertility, broke at once into view. We soon reached its northern shore, and travelled, sometimes, along the beach, and sometimes mounted the cliffs, which overhang its waters. On one of these beautiful eminences stands New-Mall, the residence of Sir William Erskine. The house, partly antient, and partly modern, with its battlemented front and columned arcade, presents an irregular, but pleasing effect. The ground adorned with wood hanging down the steeps, and the lawn on its summit, occasionally shaded with groups of shrubs, or forest-trees, the open spaces through which are admirably managed,

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so

so as to command the shores of the Forth, with all their beautiful environs, may challenge most situations in North Britain. Beneath this delightful cliff, on the margin of the Forth, and not far from New Mall, stands the borough of Culrofs. I need hardly tell you, it is charmingly placed in the neighbourhood of such objects, as I have mentioned.

WE could not pass this town without looking into Lord Dundonald's coal-work, from which the water is drawn by a steam cylinder. We did not, at the moment we were there, meet with the most accurate intelligence; but we understood, that the peculiar sort of coal, from whence his Lordship's mineral tar is extracted, has begun here, at last, to fail; if it be not nearly exhausted, after a great expence incurred in the prosecution of this ingenious discovery. Whether experiments have been sufficiently repeated in its application to the bottoms of ships, for preventing their corrosion by worms, to make its failure much regretted on that account, I had no opportunity of learning.

This

This tar was, I believe, a principal ingredient in a species of paint, or unguent advertised, two or three years ago, under the affected appellation, of an invifible green; for the ornament and preservation of park-pales, and board-fences of gardens.

PROCEEDING a little way along the borders of the Forth, we came to Kincairn; a lively town of trade, twelve miles westward of Dumfermline. Having breakfasted here we pursued our journey without delay, in order to avail ourselves of a fine day in a beautiful country. A short ride brought us to Clackmannan; an ancient borough of mean and desolate appearance. The remains of the old royal palace, however, still engage curiosity. Its scite is on the summit of a hill; the town scattered below it on one side. A lofty tower, having the rest of its dimensions proportionable to the height, with projections, in the Saxon stile, round the top, give an air of grandeur to the approach. A gateway led us through the bottom of this edifice into a court, by no means spacious

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enough

enough to prevent disappointment after entering it so magnificently beneath Bruce's Tower ; for so it is called.

THE building, opposite the entrance just named, occupying all that side of the court, is more modern than the rest ; and may, perhaps, have been reared within these two hundred years. It has three vestibules, and over each are sculptured different armorial ensigns in bas-relief. On each of their tablets, which are of stone, is written some portion of the following pious motto: *remember to thank God for his goodness*. Any thing found, where it is least expected, that is gratitude, where most due, is apt to cause surprise: when a traveller feels this emotion he generally mentions the object, which excites it. May this well-intended motto guard the simplicity of it from contempt !

THIS part of the old palace, being inhabited by a private gentleman, just now absent from home, there appeared some difficulty in getting admittance into Bruce's Tower, in order to inspect some relics of his armour preserved there.

there. Mr. Pennant says; these are his great sword and casque ; and we heard too of a sword, which had belonged to Sir John Graham, the constant friend and attendant of the heroic Wallace. Leaving these military antiquities unseen, and whatever else of curiosity the apartments of this venerable structure may contain, we were allowed to walk in the garden, which lies behind the inhabited part of the palace. This spot, which occupies about an acre and half of ground, has an air of much antiquity; assisted, perhaps, by the gloom, and formal disposition of the vegetables.

A STRAIT alley, formed by two clipped hedges, one of yew, the other of holly, brought us to an old wall, the enclosure of the garden; covered thick with ivy, the growth of some centuries. Both may be co-eval with Bruce's Tower. A very antique door in the wall let us out upon the declivity of the hill, opposite to that on which the tower is placed. Here we found a grove of tall Scottish firs, apparently very old, and in no ill harmony with the trees of the garden.

The impression of antiquity, from the whole scenery of the hill, including the town itself, was so strong, as almost to create a momentary illusion of our existing in other times. The views, from this eminence, deserve attention. The ground, on either hand, is stretched out into an extensive plain; that on the right being bounded by hills, under which, embosomed in wood, stands the white mansion of Lord Cathcart; the plain towards our left terminating on the brilliant estuary of the Forth. The town of Alloa fronts the Palace Hill, and is seen half rising out of the large and noble woods which overspread the country, agreeably varied by inequalities of ground. The town and castle of Stirling, highly elevated in the horizon, and backed by distant mountains, crowns the prospect.

RETURNING by the way we came, to take our carriage at the bottom of the town, we followed the road through the plain, which I have described as lying on the right of Clackmannan. After passing through Alloa, a town of some consideration on account of its coal trade, and glass manufacture, and winding

ing sometimes through the woods and inclosures beyond it, we began, at length, to approach the heights of Stirling *, presenting the first aspect of the town from the eastern side of a superb eminence, rising, suddenly, from a large plain, with its castle and palace at the very summit of the rock.

Sept. 23.

THE day having continued uninterruptedly clear and bright, as soon as we had conquered the laborious ascent to the town, and had reached the square, attending neither to hunger nor fatigue, we dismounted, and hastened up to the highest point of the precipice ; whilst the sun had, yet, at least an hour's height above the horizon. Whether our resolution were recompensed I will leave you to judge, when mounting the top of the castle, we beheld a plain extending full eighty miles in length, by a width alternately dilating and contracting itself betwixt fifteen and twenty. Imagine

* The scite of this castle is well described by Camden, in his Scotia.—Sterlinium, vulgo Strivelin et Sterlingborough—ubi in supertilio Rupis præcipitis arx regia eminet firmissima, &c.

this expanse covered with ample meadows of the most perfect verdure, and inclosed pastures with cattle, lessening almost out of sight by their distance; these diversified by large unnumbered fields of ripened corn, with winding glades and deep recesses; and here and there, grove, thicket, or forest-wood, hanging over every little elevation at its sides, and partly surrounding the towns, villages, castles, ruined towers and convents, dispersed in all the varieties of situation and aspect. But I have still to add, that this expanse is illumined by the glittering mazes * of the Forth, which, during its lengthened course as a river, so perfectly answers, the antient discription of the Meander, that I can no way do justice to its appearance, but in the words of the poet whose genius seemed peculiarly adapted to describe it:—

Non fecus, ac liquidis Phrygius Mæander in undis
Ludit, et ambigno lapsa refluitque fluitque,
Occurrensque sibi venturas aspicit undas;
Et nunc ad fontes, nunc ad mare versus apertum
Incertas exercet aquas.——Ovid Metam. VIII.

* Such are the windings of the Forth, that the distance between Stirling and Alloa be only four miles by land, yet by water it is above twenty.—

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Had Ovid described the Forth from the exalted spot, on which I stood to gaze upon its beauties, and those of the enchanting plain through which it wanders, every word, except the name of the Phrygian stream, had probably been found in this passage. I am aware, that Wheatley or Gilpin would not allow me, with all this rich combination of objects, natural and artificial, destitute as it is of technical arrangement, and on so vast a scale as here presented, to have exhibited any thing like the picturesque of landscape. But you will understand, that I am here making no pretensions of that kind; I have rather attempted to give you the prospect of a beautiful country, from a scite calculated to comprehend, nearly under a single view, a magnificent whole of it; a magazine in which ten thousand landscapes and pictures may be found by the tourist or painter, who should have time to trace out the parts in the plain itself below; a region through which any person of feeling or imagination might be conceived to saunter with perpetual amusement. No landscape-painter, probably, would have chosen the spot where I stood, for the sketching

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ing of any portion of our scenery. Most objects should be near enough the painter's eye, to define their form, colour, and characters. A certain familiarity must subsist between him and the fore-grounds of the scene he paints. His business is to produce pleasure upon fixed principles. Grand conceptions of nature; surprise, admiration, elevation of mind; reflections upon art, cultivation and human power, and numberless sentiments and associations of ideas, will affect, and charm, a spectator on first surveying so glorious an horizon, which no rules of verbal description, drawn from the art of painting, could ever enable him to communicate to a reader. What small portion of my own feelings the profusion of my general draught above may have conveyed to yourself, you alone can judge.

THE delightful, I may say, the transporting emotions which I experienced in the contemplation of this magnificent plain, stretched out far and wide, induced me to linger within sight of it, till the last beams of the sun seemed reluctantly quitting it.

IT

IT now became high time to descend into the castle; whither we had been conducted over a draw-bridge, through the antient gateway, and from thence to a second, built by Queen Anne, into the main area, or court. This building is a grand edifice; its stile strongly marked by Norman projections from the top, probably in order to preserve some uniformity with the antique parts of the fortress.* Many of the ornaments are grotesque and difficult to characterize; if, indeed, their being grotesque does not import the want of character. On the face of the wall, next the court, are a variety of sculptured figures. The most remarkable, is that

* History says nothing certain about its antiquity: perhaps some parts of this rock were fortified by the Romans; who Mr. Pennant says, "had a camp and a military way on the west side." It appears from Tacitus, in his life of Agricola, that this general's military expeditions of the third year, were carried on in this part of Scotland, chiefly between the Firth and the Tay; and that the terror which his success had now struck into the natives, prevented their molesting the army; so that they had sufficient time for the erection of fortresses. He then says: *annotabant periti, non alium ducem opportunitates locorum sapientius legisse.* There being no place in this part of the country more advantageous for the purpose than this rock of Sterling, may it not be almost presumed, that here was one of his fortresses?

of James V. in a Highland dress, placed on a square projecting pedestal: he rebuilt the castle. A very good figure of Douglass, his cup-bearer, stands near him: both are as big as life. The next is a statue of one of the queens of Scotland; and the series is whimsically continued by those of Adam and Eve; all upon round stone pedestals, adorned with elegant wreath-work. We saw some of the old state rooms of the palace, of very large dimensions; now converted into barracks. The stories above them are destined for apartments of the military officers. Some part of the castle is modernized into a governor's house. The old chapel next it, now serves for a magazine of stores. We did not infer from this arrangement, that, as too little religion suffices for the world in general, none is thought necessary for soldiers; it may be supposed, that those, who are to occupy the barracks of the castle, may resort to one of the churches in the town. The present use of the chapel, however, is not a circumstance to prepossess them with peculiar veneration for public worship.

THE

THE parliament-house, shewn us last, is a fine spacious room 120 feet long, by 36 wide, and proportionably high. A gallery, which formerly ran round it, has been removed. This room too, is to be adapted to some military use, not likely, we will hope, to lessen the respect of soldiers for a hall of legislators.

ON returning into the court, and casting our eyes once more on these massive and stately structures, so splendidly seated on this rock, it was impossible, notwithstanding their present destination, to depart without being deeply impressed by that original air of solemn and regal grandeur, which marks the external character of the place.

A KING of Scotland, whilst he should only have contemplated his royal dignity and consequence, or a specimen of the beauty and fertility of his kingdom, from this situation, might, without reproach, have felt some elevation of heart ; for it may be questioned, whether any monarch in Europe, in point of local residence, was ever more proudly enthroned. This was the scene of James VI's education.

education. Here his mind was imbued with knowledge, and formed to the duties of a prince by the great Buchanan; whose genius we may easily suppose to have caught many a bright and impressive topic of instruction from a position, where art and nature seemed to have surrounded his pupil with the sublime and the fair.

If my reflections on this subject should be met by the common-place sneers on James's pedantry, as it is called, and I should be told, that Buchanan had taught this prince rather to dispute than to reign, and to manage his pen better than his sceptre; I would desire, it might be recollected, in the words of an elegant epitomizer* of our own history, "that if his reign was marked with none of the splendors of triumph, with no new conquests nor acquisitions, the arts were silently and happily going on to improvement; reason was extending its influence, and shewing mankind a thousand errors in religion and government, that had been rivetted by long prescription. People were now no longer joined to some popular leader; but each began

* Lyttleton's Letters.

to think for himself: The reformation had introduced a spirit of liberty even while the constitution was built upon arbitrary power. James taught them, by his own example, to argue upon those topics, till they became able to prove, that he had chosen the weakest side of the controversy. Could that reign be called inglorious to the king, whilst happy to his people; a reign which enriched them by commerce, checked by no severe impositions, and uninterrupted by war."

As we passed the upper part of the public square, on re-entering the town below the platform of the castle, our notice was attracted by the old palace of the family of Argyle, and the exotic singularity of the remaining part of another, called the Earl of Mar's Work, sacrilegiously built, according to the opinion of the times, from the ruins of the famous abbey of Cambus-Kenneth. A little southward of the latter, stands the antient gothic church of Sterling. These, and many other structures, which have now yielded to the hand of time, contributed each their share of magnificence to the royal days of Sterling.

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

Carton, Sept. 24, 1792.

DESIROUS of seeing the effect of the rising sun on that extraordinary combination of objects, which had so much delighted us yesterday evening, I walked up soon after break of day, to the platform of the castle, and having under this variation of light, and the freshness of the morning, enjoyed the review with new satisfaction, I returned down the public walks of the town, nearly a mile through romantic woods, hanging from the side of the castle precipice. Huge bulging crags, which jut from the main precipice, and frequently lift their misshapen features among the trees, are the fundamental support of these walks. The walks themselves were part of the old gardens of the castle, to which they still lend an austerity of character, not unsuitable to the general stile of the fortrefs. The walks emerge at the bottom into pleasant green meadows and natural lawns, whose

whose amenity contrasts the frowning aspect of the hill: Among these were continued the antient gardens; and here too, is still traced the particular spot allotted for caroufels and tournaments, commanded by the ladies-hill; an eminence from whence the bright eyes of former ages at once beheld and rewarded the gallant deeds of chivalry.

BIDDING farewell to Sterling, at two miles south-east of it, we passed the village of Bannock-Bourn; where there is a manufacture of carpets. We here crossed the burn or rivulet, which, in the year 1314, flowed with the blood of the English army, under the banners of Edward II. an army led by the king in person; and so numerous a one, as England had never brought into the field on any former occasion*. Buchanan says, there were reported to be more than a hundred thousand fighting men; to which number he adds the multitude who followed their camp. English accounts fall short of this reckoning; but all agree, I believe, that

* Buchanan Lib. 8. 144. In coexercitu centum millia bel-latorum fuisse dicitur.

our forces were exceedingly more numerous and nearly three to one in proportion to the Scots under Robert Bruce. Having little talent, and less inclination to describe battles, I shall not recall to your memory a particular detail of this famous action.

BUT the causes of the total overthrow and disgrace of the English are worth recollection; as they serve to teach, what perhaps will appear in half the battles which have ever been fought, how much less superiority of numbers, where natural courage, military knowledge and discipline, are nearly equal on both sides, contribute to success, than well concerted stratagems and, sometimes, accidental circumstances of little apparent consequence.

THIS battle, which happened in the month of July, seems to have begun in the evening, or late in the afternoon. A part of each army was engaged with considerable fury; the English having first advanced to the charge. They suffered some disadvantage at first, by being drawn into an ambuscade,
and

and by losing one of their generals. Both sides fought, however, with equal obstinacy, and the battle was becoming general, when night closing upon them caused a cessation. In the shallow channel of the Bannock, Bruce had ordered many holes to be dug, in which sharp stakes, pointed at each end, were driven; so as just to be concealed beneath the current. A number of pits were also made between the rivulet and his own camp, provided with stakes and other instruments of annoyance, covered over by sods of green turf, artfully supported on poles; so as to preserve an appearance of unbroken ground. The advanced parties of the English cavalry, in their impetuous onset the next morning, falling into these snares, were cruelly galled, and most of their horses disabled for action.

THIS disaster caused the utmost confusion and dismay. The Scots, taking advantage of the moment, rushed forward sword in hand, and cut the greatest part of this body of cavalry in pieces. The body of English archers next pressed forward on the right wing of the enemy, whom their arrows annoyed so

successfully, that they were on the point of retreating, when a body of reserve came on to their support, and attacking the flank of the English, entirely routed them. Meanwhile Edward, who commanded the center of the army, was marching his forces against the main body of the Scots. At this instant the boys, cutlers and other followers of the Scottish camp, who had observed the destruction of the English from a neighbouring eminence, raised a loud shout; at the same time running down in considerable numbers towards the field, for the sake of plunder. The English, dispirited by the ill fortune of the day, and strangely deluded by these acclamations, mistook this juvenile and disorderly multitude for a reinforcement of Scottish troops, and, panic-struck, betook themselves to flight with the wildest precipitation; the king with great difficulty and danger, escaping to Dunbar, and from thence to Berwick by water.

IF a little stratagem and an accidental circumstance, from which the operations of a day, the most glorious to one kingdom, and the
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the most disgraceful to another, apparently took their direction and issue, are causes too feeble for such mighty effects, we know to what hand unseen to attribute the guidance of the whole.

THE English were now entirely driven out of Scotland; and thus ended the vain attempts of the two first Edwards, to annex Scotland to England, by the conquest of arms. After various efforts of his predecessor, the father had sent one army after another with different success against the Scots, had divided their kingdom into two parties, had succeeded at least to render his name terrible, and to acquire the character of a great warrior. He was preparing again to march a vast army into the heart of the kingdom, with an intention (to use his own expression) "of destroying it from sea to sea."

DEATH stopped his career. His earnest advice and dying request to Edward II. was, to prosecute the war with Scotland till he had entirely subdued; it desiring that his bones might be carried about at the head of his

army, the more effectually to strike terror into an enemy, whom he had so often subdued. What effect the bones of Edward I. might have had, cannot be known. It does not appear, that the experiment was made: His son's reliance was probably on the number of his host: the issue we have seen. The loss and mischief of these contests to England, whether victorious or otherwise, was certain: let the poet calculate their glory.

Alas! not dazzled with their noon-tide ray,
 Compute the morn and ev'ning to the day;
 The whole amount of that enormous fame—
 A tale, that blends their glory with their shame *.

INSTEAD of keeping the high-road all the way from Bannock-Bourn to Falkirk, we quitted it for another on our left, which leads to Carron; our way lying now in that level and pleasant tract of country, called the Carse of Sterling; reckoned one of the most fertile and best cultivated regions of Scotland. On approaching Carron we first descry a small

* Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. 4.

lake,

lake, formed by the river of that name, extending along the side of a wood: a long range of dun-coloured brick building, on the farther side of the water comes next into sight. Beyond these, and above them, we see frequent and palpitating flames, shooting up in the air, and then subsiding amidst vast volumes of black smoke, which fill the atmosphere. As soon as we reached the busy spectacle of the manufactory, a person, properly instructed, conducted us through a series of building, distributed round a large court; where our curiosity was amused with a succession of those various processes, by which iron is subdued to every form and impression at the will of man.

For a view of the primary operations we were led without the precincts, which I have mentioned, upon a high raised platform, consisting of scoria, cinders and ashes, and occupying a quarter of an acre of ground. On this were blazing, at different intervals, in the open air, many large coal fires. Here the iron ore, of which vast heaps from the mines of Lancashire, Cumberland and Scotland, lay in

fight, undergoes the process of roasting. Freed by this preparation from its grosser impurities, it is thrown, together with limestone, into furnaces or ovens; several of which are kept continually glowing with the greatest heat, by a discharge of air from an iron tube, as big, at the largest end, as a 24 pounder, and lessening gradually for a length of 20 feet, till the smaller end reaches the bottom of the furnace. Through this tube a stream of air is communicated to the fire from four large iron cylinders, fixed perpendicularly at its greater end; the pistons of which, two rising, and two descending, alternately, in quick succession, cause a continual expiration of air; the strength and violence of the blast filling the edifice with a tremendous roar. These pistons are kept incessantly moving, for suction and expression of air, by several water-wheels 24 feet in diameter. Are not these bellows on a sublime scale? one tube emitting, perhaps, as much air in a minute, as could, in that space, be produced by a thousand of those little asthmatic utensils by our parlour fire-fides. The flames of Nebuchadnezzar's hottest furnace were never blown

up

up by a more emphatic, or persevering blast. The ore being now brought into its state of fusion, an aperture is made in the clay, which stops the mouth of the oven, and a cascade of liquid fire instantly rolls forth into a metal receiver, or chaldron. The moulds of the different articles to be cast, lye all, ready-formed, in figured beds of sand and charcoal. We now see many hands busily employed in lading out the fused metal from the receiver, and hastening with it to the beds of sand. Here they pour it into certain canals, which distribute it, in due proportion, over the whole surface of the patterns. In a few minutes we are presented with an exhibition of various instruments, utensils, and articles of furniture, subservient to the convenience, comfort, and ornament of social life. Among other pieces of hardware we saw some Bath-stoves, and grate-backs, cast upon very elegant models. But iron-work, of every kind, from the candlestick which holds light to the Philosopher in his garret, to the cannon *,

* It is a fact of some curiosity, as not being, perhaps, much known, that a method of making cannon with leather, was once not uncommonly adopted. And it is certain, that

whose

whose thunder announces the power of Great-Britain to the remotest inhabitants of the earth, is executed in this magnificent foundry. The forming of iron into pigs by fusion, and into bars by the continual beating of ponderous hammers, put into motion by water-wheels, were no unentertaining part of our exhibition. We saw specimens of an infinite variety of articles finished for sale, in our walk through the magazines and repositories belonging to the establishment. The multiplicity and extent of these Vulcanian operations, which are continually carrying on at Carron, may be conceived from our information, that no less a quantity than 200 tons of coals is consumed every week upon them.

To give very particular or distinct ideas of these, or of any other manufactures, without plates, is scarcely possible; but from the general and picturesque images which I have endeavoured to convey, relative to such objects, in the Swedes had recourse to it in their wars of the last century. Cannon of this sort was found too easily burst to remain long in use.

this,

this, and some of the preceding letters, may be inferred the great power, which man has established over the world of matter, by the ministerial agency of fire, air, and water. Of these three elements, science may be said to have formed the grand tripod, on which rest all the arts and manufactures; to which our country owes so much of its prosperity and its fame; and in the exercise of which North Britain has, for some time, taken so brilliant a share.



LETTER

L E T T E R XXVII.

Linlithgow, Sept. 25, 1792.

IT was impossible to be within two miles of Kennaird, and to quit the neighbourhood without wishing to offer our respects to the Abyssinian traveller, and requesting permission to inspect his museum.

THE latter point being obtained fortunately gave us an opportunity of seeing Mr. Bruce himself, who received us with flattering marks of attention. When we had taken some refreshment, he was obliging enough to accompany us to his museum, and to direct his librarian's search for such objects as he thought likely to interest our curiosity : upon many of them he himself commented in a very agreeable manner, relating at the same time, several little incidents and anecdotes connected with the occasions of procuring them, which enhanced both our entertainment and information. This repository occupies

occupies a large room, and its valuable furniture is arranged in a number of neat glazed cabinets, each having a cupboard below it, beautifully painted with the figure of some curious object of natural history, described by Mr. Bruce in his African tour; many of them found on the coasts of the Red Sea and the Nile. This museum consists, as you will imagine, not solely of articles from the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, of curious petrifications, *lufus naturæ*, &c. but has many rare specimens of art, distinguished by their singularity, or exquisite workmanship; and lastly, a collection of Abyssinian and Arabian manuscripts.

As, after a cursory survey of some thousand articles, without an opportunity of making notes whilst the objects are before the eye, it is impossible to be sure, that the most curious may not have escaped the memory, I find little inclination to specify those, which mine may have retained. If I mention, among the petrifications, a horse's knee agatized, or speak of stones more curiously reticulated, than per-

perhaps most other collections can exhibit, it is with the mortification of having forgotten many things more worthy of curiosity. Ores of every description you will naturally anticipate. The variety and splendor of the sea-shells; not to mention the novelty of many of them is scarcely to be equalled elsewhere. Among the reptile kind, none perhaps, more deservedly claimed our notice than the serpent consulted in divination; but of that you know Mr. Bruce has particularly treated in his book.

AMONG the artificial curiosities, which were shewn us, was a drinking cup, or goblet with four heads, embossed round the outside; an antique from Rhodes; and a model of it executed at Glasgow, in a manner highly creditable to the skill of the British artist. Any thing relative to the Nile, the first object of the Abyssinian traveller, was sure to attach every spectator; and Mr. Bruce himself, seemed not unpleasantly interested in displaying his invention, to measure the rise and fall of that river; a brazen bar with a graduated

duated scale ingeniously converted * to that purpose from some cramps used in the arches of Egyptian cisterns : Nor did he, perhaps, with less feeling, call our attention, to the hilt of a spear marked by bullets, discharged at himself, but fortunately missing aim ; in an encounter with a desperate banditti of assassins and robbers.

HAD Horace himself been at our elbow, and, vivâ voce, founded in our ears—

Nil admirari prope res est una, Numici, &c.

it had been impossible not to have felt a paroxysm of admiration, when, next, we beheld two cups made from the horns of the very bullock, who roar'd through them no sounds of welcome to the bloody banquet, furnished from his own living flesh, to the royal epicures of Gondar ; two cups turned by the delicate hand of one of his Abyssian majesty's daugh-

* Under the distressing circumstance, I think he said, of having been deprived, by some accident, of his mathematical apparatus.

ters,

ters, and presented by herself to Mr. Bruce, as a memorial of his entertainment, and reception at that polite court.

LAST of all we were favoured with inspection of the cabinet of manuscripts; written upon parchment of goat-skins, and manufactured by the priests of those countries. From the account which Mr. Bruce has given of the low state of religion and science in Arabia, it is but too probable, that the priesthood, a channel through which all the literature of Europe, since the revival of letters, has first been derived, to our enlightened quarter of the globe, has, in Abyffinia, contributed little else to the extension of knowledge than the material substance of books.

MR. BRUCE mentioned to us, that thirty different languages were spoken in the camp of one of the caravans, in which he had occasionally travelled on the continent of Africa, and that it was his desire to have procured a translation of the "Song of Solomon" (from the Arabic, I believe) into them all. This was executed for him in ten of them, beautifully

tifully written in Æthiopic characters; and each in a different-coloured ink, to prevent a confusion of tongues; which, in this instance, had certainly not been miraculous. To spare the ears of the unlearned, and perhaps, at some moments, his own recollection, he calls these languages, with some humour, the red, blue, green, or yellow languages, &c. according to the colour of its character. Upon Mr. Bruce's shewing these manuscripts to a lady distinguished for the vivacity of her remarks, and informing her, that the word *kist*, which occurs in Solomon's song, is to be met with, expressing the same idea, in some passages of his rain-bow of languages, she pleasantly observed to him—"I always told you, Mr. Bruce, that kissing is the same all the world over."

BEFORE we departed, Mr. Bruce obligingly accompanied us to an inclosure in his park, to shew us his Abyssinian sheep. They are entirely white, except their heads, which are black. Their tails are large, and, indeed, the animal is larger than our common sheep. They are extremely tame, and often very fro-

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licksome.

licksome. The three or four, remaining in Mr. Bruce's possession, are unfortunately all males: One of them bred with a she-goat; but the offspring died.

EXCEPT a month or two in summer, which Mr. Bruce passes upon an estate in the Highlands, he spends the rest of the year chiefly at Kennaird, divided betwixt his museum, his books, and his rural improvements, in elegant retirement and lettered conversation. This latter estate has descended to him from ancestors of his name, who have successively possessed it upwards of 380 years. He has rebuilt the family mansion since his return from his travels. In what we saw of it, good taste and convenience equally prevail. The park appears to be well wooded and pleasant, and his situation commands some of the finest views of the Forth. His museum, every article of which, by association of ideas, must recal some incident, some scene, some object new or strange in his travels, cannot but be to him a fund of perpetual entertainment and delight; which, through the liberality of his character, as a man of learning,

learning, and a citizen of the world, he freely communicates to all who can have any pretension to approach him.

As every thing is interesting that relates to extraordinary men, you will not be displeased with a trait or two of the Abyssinian traveller's person. His figure is above common size; his limbs athletic, but well proportioned; his complexion sanguine, his countenance manly and good-humoured, and his manners easy and polite. The whole outward man is such as announces a character, well calculated to contend with the difficulties and trying occasions which so extraordinary a journey was sure to throw in his way. That his internal character, the features of his understanding and his heart, correspond with these outward lineaments you, who have read his work, cannot be at any loss to know.

WE rode in the afternoon from Kennaird to Linlithgow, through a pleasant country. Our arrival at this town, in the dusk and vapour of the evening, gave a mysterious and

magnified air to its antique ruins and old fashioned buildings, public and private; a dimness and uncertainty of aspect which played agreeably with the imagination. A few glimmering rays of candle-light, shooting from some of the houses, helped to shew us faintly the sides of the streets as we passed along to our inn. A degree of illusion hung about every object, lending to each something both of form and importance, not properly belonging to it. Returning daylight told but the truth: that Linlithgow, though still respectable, had seen better days. It was one of the royal residences, and seems to have been partially distinguished by many of the kings of Scotland.

THE tower, and exterior walls of the palace, built round a square court in the castle stile, remain almost entire; and enough too of its interior divisions, to shew the disposition of many of the apartments. Several of the rooms are of noble dimensions, and the traditional designation of them is still pointed out. There are stair-cases, passages, and galleries, still practicable enough to allow us to ramble
about

about this venerable ruin, pretty much at our ease; but the *ensemble* is viewed with much more effect than the detail. Every one, however, takes an interest in the bare walls of that room, in which Mary Stuart was born, and we looked upon them with increased impression when we were told, that her dying father, James V. left her heiress of Scotland eight days after her birth, with these prophetic words: "The kingdom came by a lass*, and would depart with another."

THIS royal castle stands upon a small clear lake; probably contained within the precincts of the antient garden. If its banks, at present naked of wood, were formerly well planted, the scenery must have been delicious; I mean within itself, for the ground in general is too low to command much of the adjacent country.

THE old church in the near neighbourhood of the castle, is always recommended,

* Margery Bruce, daughter of Robert Bruce, married to Walter Stuart, and mother to Robert II. the first of the Stuarts on the throne of Scotland. She is, by mistake, called Mary, in Tallent's Chronological Tables.

I believe, to the inspection of strangers; and in its former state, when disencumbered of the clumsy seats, and gloomy galleries, by which all these antient edifices in North-Britain are œconomically deformed, its ample space, its light gothic arches, and sculptured columns at present scarcely discoverable, must undoubtedly have rendered it an elegant and noble pile in that species of architecture. But that, which most piqued our curiosity, was the gloomy chapel in one of the cross aisles, where James IV. before the battle of Flodden, was addressed by the famous apparition, urging him to desist from that enterprize, and which, after having delivered itself with all ghostly solemnity, vanished, says an old Scottish historian *, “like a blink of the sun, or a whip of a whirlwind.” Our conductor approached the place with cautious step, and talked of this story with a shivering circumspection, which made me think him under much stronger possession of the spirit than the Scottish monarch at the time of its appearance. James lent “no serious hearing to what it had unfolded †,” but rashly marched

* Lindsay.

† Hamlet.

forward

forwards to that fatal field, accompanied by a brave nobility, who chose rather to die, than to desert their soverign. Twelve earls, thirteen lords, nine eldest sons of noblemen, and an incredible number of barons fell with the king *.

WE went from the church just to cast our eyes upon the window, from whence the regent Murray, was shot, 23d of January, 1569, in the plenitude of his power, as he passed the streets of Linlithgow. Though most of our later travellers, passing through Linlithgow, have not failed to take notice of this remarkable catastrophe, and have given an account of it from Buchanan, Robertson, or some other respectable sources, yet none of them seem to have consulted Dr. G. Mackenzie, who, in his life of Queen Mary of Scotland, has more fully related the circumstances of provocation, which led to it. They being worthy of observation, and the book not common, I am tempted to relate the story upon his ground-work, but not without compressing his narration, which is rather too diffuse.

* See Robertson, I. 63.

HAMILTON of Bothwelhaugh was one of six gentlemen, who had been taken fighting in the cause of the Queen at Langside. They were all imprisoned, and their estates condemned to confiscation; but before this latter measure was executed, an arrangement was agreed upon among themselves, namely, to offer an estate, in the possession of Hamilton, to Sir Lewis Ballenden; a lawyer, and great favourite of the regent, on condition of his procuring their liberation. He accepted the terms, and promised, not only to obtain their enlargement, but a reversal of the sentence of confiscation. But, instead of any effort to accomplish his promise, he proceeded to take immediate possession of the estate and the family mansion of Woodhoullie, turning Hamilton's wife out of doors, naked, in a very cold night. This cruel and shocking indignity drove the poor lady, before morning, to raving madness. The year after Hamilton procured his release, through the Duke of Chatelherault, and by the regent's intercession with Queen Elizabeth. As soon as he was at liberty, he petitioned the regent to be restored to his estate, to which Ballenden could
make

make no just pretensions. The Earl of Murray refused, answering, "that he was an honefter man who had it, than he who fought it." Hamilton now meditated revenge; but, would not execute it, without first having recourse to another petition; which his wife, bathed in tears, presented upon her knees, to the regent, in council. He, understanding its contents, without taking further notice, quitted the church, where the nobles were assembled. Mrs. Hamilton followed him, and pulling him by the sleeve, said, she was commanded by her husband, to tell him, that, whenever Hamilton saw him next, if justice were not done, one of them must fall. "Fall he who must," said the regent. Hamilton kept his word, and being secretly stationed behind the window, still shewn at Linlithgow, shot the regent as he passed through the town, on his return from Sterling. The bullet passing through his body, below the navel, killed the horse of Sir George Douglas, riding next him. The house being barricaded in front, Hamilton found means to escape, went into France, and died in the service of the king of Spain.

WE

WE are now bidding adieu to this historical town, as we intend to reach the capital this afternoon. Not to have digressed a mile or two from the direct road to see Hopetown-House, would have been matter of reproach. Our going thither, however, was not a digression from our original plan.

A HOUSE like this, splendidly regular, as it is, in point of architecture, could not have been more happily placed to display a magnificent facade. A lawn of vast extent opens before it, bounded on one side by the Forth, under the appearance of a vast lake, and on the other by noble woods. The approach is well managed: we turn suddenly upon this princely mansion, as we issue from the woods through which the road brings us; but at such a considerable distance, that the eye has sufficient opportunity to contemplate the grandeur of the object, before we arrive at it. The body of the house is connected by two doric colonades with the wings; the latter adorned with pilasters of the same order. Many of the rooms are fine; but we saw few, if any, upon so large a scale as the imagination
had

had naturally anticipated from such an exterior. Nothing but the ground floor was shewn us; and our conductor, from what circumstance I know not, apparently, wished that our curiosity might be soon gratified. Among the pictures, which are numerous, and reckoned to be well-chosen, a St. Francis, by Guido Reni, and an Angel's Head, I think, by Caracci, particularly claimed our attention. I was glad to find Gawin Hamilton's Lucretia, which I saw him painting at Rome, distinguished by an honourable situation in the painter's native country.

THE garden, originally in the Dutch style, has undergone very considerable improvements with respect to its internal scenery. It possesses a great deal of fine wood, and a natural variety of ground. If artificial scenes of strong character and impression have been less studied here than they might have been, it was imagined, perhaps, that the innumerable beauties of the Forth, and its environs, would scarcely suffer the eye to dwell much upon them. We regretted that there was no seat or pavillion, from whence they might
be

be contemplated and admired at perfect ease, under all their varieties of light, of weather, and seasons. This is a manifest desideratum in this place; but we understood, that this accomodation is intended. There is, indeed, a spot to receive it, worthy of the brightest exertions of taste and genius, that may be bestowed upon its construction.

SOON after we return into the road to Edinburgh, the country begins to assume an air of elegance, from the frequency of villas, ornamented ground, high cultivation, and the views of the Forth and distant mountains, adapted, altogether, to excite the most agreeable prepossessions in favour of the situation of the capital. After passing through Queen's-Ferry, a pleasing little port, which with its naval appendages, might adorn a landscape of Claude Lorrain, a few miles brings us within sight of Edinburgh-Castle, so placed upon its aerial precipice, almost perpendicular towards the eye, that the wall of the building might, at first, be imagined, to rise from the very bottom of the rock. The illusion, whilst it lasts, is perfect enchantment.

LETTER

LETTER XXVIII.

Edinburgh, Oct. 1792.

ON casting an eye over my minutes of observation, and other materials, with which a stay of ten days in the capital of Scotland has furnished me, I find them so numerous and multifarious, that, as I mean not to send you in form, “a present state of the city of Edinburgh,” but solely to give a slight and impressive sketch, and that within the compass of a single letter, I am under considerable difficulty how to arrange and generalize my abundance of particulars, in order to accomplish my purpose: Though I am far from intending you a “Tableau d’Edinbourg,” correctly designed and coloured; yet I would willingly attempt something beyond the meagre outlines of a map: Suppose my essay then a sort of aqua-tinta drawing: This, could I fortunately touch it with due spirit, might perhaps be that sort of representation, beyond which a traveller’s letter ought not aspire.

THE

THE town of Edinburgh has, within these last thirty years, undergone greater improvement, and received not less addition, in proportion to its original dimensions, than London itself.

OUR entrance on its western side, from Linlithgow, gave us an opportunity of comparing with each other the nearer outlines and general appearance of the old, and new towns; the former lying on the right, the other on the left of a grand road, carried in a strait line for almost a mile betwixt them. The castle, on the naked rock, from its bold and exalted situation, its vastness, domineering aspect and picturesque irregularity of parts, its battlements and towers, &c. first seizes the traveller's sight, and, for some moments, rivets his attention. His eye next slides along the antique and lofty range of buildings, public and private, descending eastward from the castle, and impending over a deep valley, called the North-Loch. The whole assemblage of objects toward the right exhibits, on the uneven scite of this towering rock, an air of antiquity and uncouth grandeur. Upon the
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the left, and near the eye, on level, but high ground, runs a long line of modern houses, built of white stone, upon an elegant and uniform plan, facing the old castle and the town, already described; and thus, at once, giving and receiving the happiest effect of contrast. This line of building, called Prince's Street, forms the first visible side of that magnificent suite of parallelograms, constituting the topographic plan of the new town. The continuity of this line is agreeably broken by a succession of handsome streets, all rectilinear and running, if I may express it, in perspective across George-Street, and Queen-Street, both lying parallel to, and behind, Princes-Street. George-Street, the middle one of these three longitudinal and superb divisions of the new town, is 115 feet wide; Princes-Street 100 feet, and Queen-Street of the same dimensions, each including the pavement and sunk areas. George-Street is terminated by two noble squares; St. Andrew's, on the east; and Charlotte-Square on the west; Princes-Street and Queen-Street being respectively continued parallel to the north and south sides of the two squares. At the east
end

end of Queen-street, stands the Register-Office; than which none of the public-modern buildings of Edinburgh, are more justly entitled to notice. The foundation of this building, first suggested by the late Earl of Morton, Lord Register of Scotland, was laid with circumstances of great ceremony in the year 1774; and the edifice erected upon a plan of that distinguished architect, the late Mr. Robert Adams. This beautiful structure, although one half of the plan only is yet executed, is so managed as not absolutely to appear incomplete.

THE length of the facade is 200 feet; the breadth of the building 120: a dome rises from the center 80 feet in height, and 50 in diameter. In the middle of the front is a pediment with the arms of Great-Britain: this projection is supported by four corinthian columns, including three windows. On either side of this, at the corners of the front, is another projection, each of them mounted by a small cupola, and surrounded by an elegant balustrade of stone. These projections have each a Venetian window. Between these,
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and on either side of the three windows beneath the pediment just mentioned, are four others, making thirteen in the upper story of the building ; which is adorned from end to end with a Corinthian entablature. The same number of windows, in the rustic story below, answers those first mentioned.

THE Lord Register of Scotland is, you know, a minister of state ; his department the custody of the records of this country, and the direction of persons employed in the office. The most antient records of Scotland were carried away or destroyed by Edward I. as testimonies of the independence of this nation, which it was his policy to conceal or annihilate ; a measure adopted by Cromwell on the same views, with regard to those records which succeeded the first. These latter, however, were intended to be returned by Charles II. but a considerable part of them unfortunately perished in a wreck of one of the ships conveying them back again : those which arrived safe, in another, are said to have remained ever since in much confusion.

NORTH-EAST of the Register-Office, is St. James's-Square, and some new streets about it; one of them, through which runs the road down to Leith, will e'er long join Edinburgh to that town and its port.

You have now a general idea of the new town, which, I should add, is built wholly of stone, and with great taste in architecture. Over the whole prevails an air of lightness, elegance and splendour, probably not to be surpassed, if equalled, in any other city in Europe. The prospects from Princes-Street* towards the castle, the old town, the hills, and the country on the east and west, are varied, singular and striking in an eminent degree. Those commanded by Queen-Street, on the opposite quarter, comprehend the grand expanse of the Forth, the moving and lively scenery of its commerce, its different islands, and the rich country intervening, ornamented with villas, gardens, groves and

* The reader, in order to conceive clearly, how Prince's-street and Queen's-street, mentioned just after it, command the prospects described, should be told, that each consists but of a single line of houses; the former fronting the south; the latter, the north.

meadows.

meadows. At a small distance westward, are the Earl of Murray's house, gardens, and woods; from which, toward the Forth, runs a charming plantation-walk to Lord Gardenstone's Temple of Hebe; the reservoir of certain mineral waters, said to resemble those of Harrowgate. From these scenes the eye is carried to the numerous towns and villages on the farther shore of the Forth, to the county of Fife, and, beyond it, the mountains in the distance; altogether uniting such an assemblage of objects, on such an extent of land and water, as the situation of few streets in any city can boast.

THE only prominent features of George-street, which strike the eye apart from its general beauty and symmetry, are the Physician's Hall and St. Andrew's Church, opposite each other: I cannot pass the latter without more particular notice. It is of an elliptic or oval form: The transverse axis or longer diameter is, within the walls, 87 feet; its conjugate 64. Four Corinthian columns support a very elegant portico towards the street: A spire 186 feet high, beautiful in

itself, but too much beyond the other proportions of the building, starts up into the air betwixt the church and the portico; its summit leaving them disdainfully both far beneath. The ordonnance of the interior is admirable; the pulpit, the seats and gallery being so contrived, as that the preacher commands every face in the congregation, and every face the preacher. The pulpit is placed by the wall at the north side of the building. The pews are all regularly adjusted to the curve of the opposite side, rising in just proportions one behind the other; a gallery above them directly fronts the pulpit. The simplicity, neatness, and intelligence, which characterise the interior of this church, might deservedly render it a model for imitation. It may, perhaps, seem remarkable, that the plan of St. Andrew's Church was designed by a military man: Major Frazer of the engineers. The spire was not part of the original plan; and has been erected some years since the foundation of the church.

THE projector of the new town, and of the chief improvements in the old one, which latter
I shall

I shall briefly mention by and by, and under whose auspices several of them were finished, is said to have been the Lord Provost Drummond; elected six times chief magistrate of Edinburgh, and still celebrated for his patriotic virtues. But this gentleman, too modest to arrogate to himself the honour of having suggested the first ideas of these noble plans, always ascribed them to the Duke of York, James VII. "who," says a respectable historian* of this city, "in a visit to Edinburgh, had the penetration to discover, at one view, the improvements that might be made; and pointed out to the magistrates, the extension of the city both on the southern and northern sides." It seems observable enough, that, although the original conception of these splendid improvements is thus traced up to the abdicated race, yet nothing can be more expressive of loyalty to our present family on the throne, than the names of the streets and other distinguished parts of the new town. You will here recollect George Street, and Charlotte Square; to which I may add Hanover and Frederic

* Kincaid.

Streets; and George Square, lately built on the south side of the old town. Whilst loyalty thus reigns in the hearts of the citizens of Edinburgh, a well wisher may be allowed to augur, that the prosperity and beauty of their town will go hand in hand, under the influence of this laudable affection, and both may continue their progress to distant generations,

I WILL now attempt a sketch of the old town in the fewest words I am able. This chiefly occupies the hill, on the summit of which stands the castle; the middle and loftiest eminence of the three hills, on and about which the whole of Edinburgh is built. The houses of the old town crowded very numerously about the castle hill, to avail themselves of the protection of the fortrefs. The hill keeps pretty rapidly descending from the castle, apparently for more than a mile eastward; covered with building all the way down the ridge, as well as on either side. The lower stories of many of the houses built on its sides, are excavated from the rock itself; and, that the ground lying within the pro-

protection of the castle, might be as much œconomised as possible, they seek for space in the air, by ascending frequently to eleven and twelve stories in height, and sometimes still higher. The streets were all originally narrow for the œconomical reason just assigned; uneven and irregular from the nature of the ground.

THE southern hill is partly occupied by the rest of the old town lying contiguous to the streets already spoken of, and partly by so much of the new one as lies southward of the old; which last consists principally of George Square, and certain streets opening into it, all handsomely built; but in point of stile, situation, or extent, not comparable to the new town on the north. The whole of the old city, which must originally have been both ugly and inconvenient, as indeed much of it remains at present, has nevertheless been greatly improved. The bad parts are much concealed. The south and north bridges, flung from one hill to another, and over some of the streets sunk betwixt them, now connect both towns, and carry one entire and

continued street, though bearing more than one name, through the whole of the old town in a northerly direction, terminating at the register-office in the new one. This grand line is crossed, almost at right angles, by the High-street and Cannongate, running in one direction from the castle to the opposite end of the town on the east. These streets, which are of great length, and considerable width, have been in many respects modernised, and partly rebuilt; and being disencumbered of nuisances, of disagreeable and embarrassing objects, now give an air of neatness and elegance to the most prominent parts of the old town, which lessen that dissimilitude between the ancient and modern districts, sufficiently to unite the whole under the idea of one large and highly embellished capital.

BUT those members, which contribute more particularly to the embellishment of the old town, and add even a share of ornament to the new one, are the public buildings of Edinburgh; which, as strangers, it is needless to say, we could not omit visiting. As, however, I have neither time, knowledge,
nor

nor inclination sufficient to assume the busy character of a guide; much less the important one of an historian; you must not expect from me minute details or formal descriptions of them. But to catch, at least, a distant and cursory view of them, conceive yourself following me, with a telescope in your hand, up to Calton Hill, or Authur's Seat; situations, in the immediate environs so elevated, as with a glass to command almost every considerable object in the city with some degree of distinctness. As each of the most conspicuous edifices happens, with or without order, to fall within our ken, I will take notice of its name at least, and sometimes of its characteristic circumstances, or designation.

THE castle, placed on the summit of that bold rock, and 300 feet above its base, wants not to be named: At the lower extremity of the street, the abbey and palace of Holyrood-House present to your eye characters of antiquity and grandeur, which evidently announce them. That plain large building opposite the register office, is the theatre: In St. Andrew's-Square, a little to the north-west

west of this, the excise-office, with its pediment supported by corinthian pilasters, and the two noble houses adjacent, one on either side, appear altogether with fine effect. In the quarter, called St. Giles's, you see the fine old gothic church of that name, dedicated to the tutelary saint of Edinburgh. The toll-booth church, and the prison, from the vicinity of which it takes its name, you perceive not distant from the former. On one end of the south bridge, you catch the magnificent columns of the new college ; which, when finished, will be one of the finest structures in Europe, dedicated to literature : On the other, the royal infirmary ; extending either wing 175 feet from the center of the body. On the northern extremity of Hunter's Square, and facing the High Street, you observe the Tron Church and its stately tower. The parliament-house, containing the court of exchequer, the treasury-chamber, and court of session, cannot escape your notice. The last object within the city, which perhaps you would wish me to particularize, is Herriot's hospital ; a structure, whose numerous towers and projecting turrets

rets give it a very original air: This piece of architecture is ascribed to Inigo Jones. It was founded in 1628, by the person whose name it bears, goldsmith to James VI. for the education, the maintenance, and bringing up of the orphan sons of freemen of Edinburgh. In our walk over Calton Hill, David Hume's round, tower-like monument, and the observatory are too near us to need telescopic survey. Our several movements here, and our station at Arthur's seat having enlarged our horizon at will, so as to gratify us, in addition to what we have already seen, with views of the town of Leith and its port, crowded with vessels; with a boundless command of the Germanic Ocean; and, on the land-side, of a vast range over the cultivated, populous and beautiful plains of Lothian, adorned with castles, elegant villas and other rural habitations of the nobility and gentry, surrounding at different distances, their brilliant capital;

* The principal public buildings not specified above, many of which we saw, are the signet-office, the exchange, the amphitheatre, the concert-hall, the public dispensary, the high-school, the mint, the English chapel, assembly rooms, Watson's hospital, the merchant's maiden hospital, the tradesman's hospital, the orphan and trinity hospitals. &c,

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we will now quit our lofty situation, and return within the walls of the city; where I propose to entertain your intellectual eye with a rapid glance over the moral state of its inhabitants.

THE Baron Holberg, reflecting on his visit to Paris early in this century, has wittily said, and, with reason, according to a Parisian author, who quotes the passage “*Qu’ à Paris il n’y a rien qui soit à meilleur marché que la raison, ni rien de plus cher que la folie.*” Mercier’s whole book * proves the observation to have been still more applicable to Paris about ten years ago, when he wrote, than it probably was when Holberg first made it. It may be questioned, whether it does not apply, with too much fitness, to several of the primary capitals in Europe; but I am inclined to believe, from my own repeated occasions of observation and comparison, to none so aptly as to that of France. Although Edinburgh, which, in point of magnitude, or

* The “Tableau de Paris.” The passage imports, that “at Paris nothing is cheaper than wisdom, or dearer than folly.”

population, will rank only among capitals of the second order, is not sufficiently advanced in folly and corruption to partake in the reproach of Holberg's remark; yet an ingenious and discerning estimator, in his "Comparative State of the Manners of Edinburgh at the different periods of 1763 and 1783, and the years since elapsed," has chosen a motto for his second letter to Sir John Sinclair upon this subject, which speaks but little in favour of the present moral aspect of this city—

Damnosa quid non imminuit dies ?

Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit

Nos nequiores, mox daturos

Progeniem vitiosorem.

* HOR. LIB. 3, ODE 6.

* How time all wasting e'en the worst impairs !

And each foul age to dregs still fouler runs !

Our fires, more vicious e'en than theirs,

Left us still more degenerate heirs,

To spawn a baser brood of monster-breeding sons !

Bp. Lowth's Imitation.

The English reader should be informed, that the last line of the original imports literally nothing more than simply "a baser progeny," and that the original only is applied in the motto.

† THIS

† THIS gentleman, having obligingly given me the performance in question, and allowed me to avail myself of its very entertaining and instructive contents, I shall take the most curious facts of his second letter, as my sole guide upon this delicate topic. But as the proposed limits of this letter compel me to abridge his materials, I shall take the further liberty of offering them in a form somewhat different from his, to avoid a frequent repetition of dates, which, in his plan, was not thought requisite.

† William Creech, Esq. a gentleman second in the magistracy of Edinburgh.



COM-

VARIOUS PARTS OF SCOTLAND. 527

*Comparison of Manners
in 1763,*

*With those of 1783, and of the
period since elapsed.*

THE dinner hour of persons of fashion, at this time, was two o'clock. Citizens engaged in business locked up their shops and countours at one o'clock, and opened them again at two.

Gentlemen appeared in the drawing rooms of their friends, to partake of the society and conversation of women at tea.

Sunday was strictly observed by all ranks, as a day set apart for devotion. Families were followed to church by their servants. Collections for the poor at the church doors amounted yearly to 1500*l*.

Delicacy, decency, and dignity of conduct characterized the manners of the capital at this period.

The sects of religion were confined to those of the estab-

ONLY twenty years afterwards, the higher and the middle ranks dined at four and five; and no business was attended to, by the latter, after dinner; dinner itself being now become a very serious business,

Invitations to tea are no longer given; ladies and gentlemen meet only at dinners, or suppers. Card parties take place after long dinners; and late suppers frequently succeed.

Churches are much neglected, especially by the men; and it is thought ungentle for families to be attended thither by their domestics. The streets are often full of people in church time, and the collections 500*l*. a year less than formerly.

Looseness, dissipation, and frivolity have succeeded; and many cease to blush at actions, which formerly would have been reckoned crimes.

In these enlightened times, a sect, calling themselves
blishment

lishment, or to those which were publicly or privately tolerated by government.

unitarians, although their tenets are expressly contrary to the established law and religion of the country, have opened a place of public worship, by public advertisement.

The clergy visited, catechised and instructed the families, within their respective parishes, in the principles of christianity and morality.

This practice is fallen into disuse: nor would the clergy be well received, should they attempt to renew it. From this relaxation, and from that ignorance of religious and moral duty, too probably a consequence of it, what can be expected, but licentiousness, and ferocity of manners?

Masters took charge of the moral conduct of their apprentices; keeping them within their own houses; aware of the important branch which the young persons were to form in the rising generation of the community.

They are now rarely received as any part of the master's family: their hours of business being ended, the rest of their time may be passed in vice and debauchery; hence they become idle, insolent and dishonest.

Any instance of conjugal infidelity, in a woman, would have banished her, irretrievably from society; and her company would have been rejected by men, who paid any regard to their character.

Women, rendered infamous by public divorce, have been, by persons of fashion, received again into society: And church-censure was disused as too flagrant a mark of infamy for a crime, the punishment of which was death, by a law unrepealed in 1783.

Fines

VARIOUS PARTS OF SCOTLAND. 429

Fines collected by the Kirk-Treasurer for bastard children scarcely exceeded 150l.

They continued yearly increasing till the particular period, when our comparison commences; at which they were quadrupled, and have since been greatly augmented.

The annual expence of the Correction-House for disorderly females was 27l 16s 1½d in 1763-4.

This has lately amounted to near 300l. and would be much higher, were all confined to hard labour, who deserve it.

Not more than five or six houses of ill-fame were discovered, and very few but of the lowest and most ignorant order of females skulked about the streets. Street-robbery, and picking of pockets were unknown: Instances of house-breaking very rare.

Brothels are increased twenty fold; every quarter of the city and suburbs is infested with females abandoned to vice; street-robberies, pick-pockets, and thieves are become no longer uncommon. The culprits have been uniformly apprehended in houses of bad fame.

The decency and sobriety of the lower ranks were remarkable; and particularly on Sundays and holidays.

A contrary behaviour has much distinguished them twenty years after. The King's birth-day, and the last day of the year, were holidays particularly marked by drunkenness, outrage and riot; disorders however, these two last years, somewhat restrained by the attention of the magistrates and the police.

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Three executions had, for many years, up to the period here alluded to, been reckoned the average for the whole kingdom of Scotland.

In 1783 there were six criminals under sentence of death in Edinburgh jail; and, upon the autumn circuit, no less than thirty seven capital indictments were issued. The two last years were fullied by no accusation of any capital crime*.

Thirty years ago, there was no such diversion as cock fighting in Edinburgh.

Within these last ten years, a cockpit has been built for this school of gambling and cruelty; where every distinction of rank and character is levelled.

Professed bruisers were unknown till 1790.

An english pugilist then opened a public school, for lessons and exhibitions in the art of boxing.

A young man was termed a "fine fellow," who, to a well-informed and accomplished mind, added elegance of manners, and a conduct guided by principle; who thought every breach of morality unbecoming the character of a gentleman; who studied to be useful to society.

This character has since been applied to the man who would drink his three bottles; who paid no debts but those of the gaming table, or tavern; who swore immoderately before the ladies, and ridiculed religion and morality as hypocrisy and folly; debauched the wife or daughter of his friend, yet returned the like injuries attempted on his own connections, as an unpardonable insult to himself, by blowing out the

* This last observation is perhaps confined to Edinburgh.

brains of the delinquent : and lastly, "the fine fellows," of later years, meant the first in all fashionable follies, and the person who disregarded the interests and the good of mankind and society, if they interfered with his own selfish pursuits and pleasures.

In the best families in town the education of daughters was fitted not only to embellish and improve their minds, but to accomplish them in the useful and necessary arts of domestic economy. A suitable conduct generally resulted from it.

Must not ideas of education be considerably changed in the capital, since the shop of the milliner and perfumer, and the business of the toilet consume the mornings even of tradesmen's daughters; since the vulgar cares of a family are devolved upon a house-keeper; since the hours disengaged from public or private amusements, are dedicated to the circulating library, or to the lesson of music, as universally taught, and at a great expence, as if the sense of hearing necessarily supposed taste and genius for the art? Every rank is eager to copy the manners of the next superior to itself.

Young ladies might have walked, unattended, through every street in the city, in perfect security. No person would have dared to interrupt, or to speak to them.

The mistresses of boarding-schools have found it necessary to advertise, that their young ladies are not permitted to go abroad without proper attendants. Boys, from bad examples at home, and worse abroad, are become forward
and

and insolent. Initiated early in vice and folly, and without restraint of religious principles, they insult the modesty of females in the streets.

In 1763, there was but one dancing assembly room: minuets were danced by each set: strict regularity with respect to dress and decorum, and great dignity of manners, observed. The company met at five o'clock in the afternoon, and began dancing at six, by order of the manager, and ended at eleven.

About four and twenty years afterwards, were three elegant assembly rooms, besides one at Leith, newly built at Edinburgh; the old one being consigned to the accommodation of the city guard. Minuets were given up: all was country-dancing: dress was neglected, especially by the men; who frequently reeled from the tavern to an assembly room, glittering with female elegance and beauty; where the ball had more the air of a game of romps than of one of the most dignified amusements of polished society. The dancing began at ten, and continued till three, or four in the morning.

In this earlier period, the morality of the stage was a question much agitated; and the immoral influence of the theatre must not have been generally doubted, when a clergyman, a few years preceding, had been brought before the assembly of the church, and suspended, for having written the tragedy of

My respectable author not chusing perhaps very explicitly to contrast this account of the stage, by all the changes in opinion and practice, which may since have taken place at Edinburgh, has contented himself with observing, that on Saturday nights in 1783, the theatre was more crowded than any other in the week;
Douglas

Douglas; one of the chastest and most interesting dramas in the English language; when any ecclesiastic, known to have appeared at a play, would have incurred church censure. Saturday night was thought, by persons not scrupulous of attending the play-house in general, the most improper in the week; probably on account of its immediately preceeding the day, which ought to be characterized by seriousness and devotion.

that impudent buffoons took liberties with the audience in their acting, which would not have been suffered formerly; and that the galleries never failed to applaud, what they would, in the earlier period, have hissed as improper, in sentiment, and decorum.*

THIS striking revolution exhibited in the manners of the capital of Scotland, by the curious comparative representation above given; a change, wrought within a space of less than thirty years, must occasion surprise, till its causes be considered. And is not the most efficient of them, in this, as in all other great cities, to be traced to its flourishing commerce and general prosperity? The

* As I have been only able to give the principal matter of Mr. Creech's second letter in this compressed form, and that without making any use of the first, which regards the external changes of the city, and is equally interesting in its way, I cannot but think it incumbent on me, for the satisfaction of my readers to mention, that both these letters are published at large, in Sinclair's statistical account of Scotland; as likewise in a small pamphlet at Edinburgh, dated May 1792.

trade of this capital, in the port of Leith, has been thought, within the term just mentioned, to have increased a hundred-fold. Riches, the consequence of extensive trade, are always followed, more or less, by luxury: Vanity, folly, moral corruption and dissolution of principle ever close the train. As, however, this ill-favoured group, the deformed offspring of luxury, have certainly the effect of augmenting and enlivening that circulation of wealth, which their parent had first set in motion, there is in the world a species of short-sighted philosophers, who delight to call them *public benefits*; but as the natural tendency of such benefits has always pressed onward to the ruin of cities and states, philosophers of another order, who look to remoter consequences, refuse their suffrage to this prostitution of names. What consolation, now, are we to look for in the back ground of this dreary prospect? None; but in this reflection: that, as the race of mankind survives the revolution and overthrow of states, government, civil order and happiness, after a dismal lapse of time marked by confusion, barbarity, and wretchedness, spring up afresh
from

from their own ashes; though it be, but to sink again to destruction, at the termination of a new series of ages. Is this then all the consolation; all the hope that remains; not only to rising, but to declining generations about to quit the stage; consolation and hope in which the latter can feel no personal interest. Far short, alas! does this fall of the natural desires of man. They point to something beyond all sublunary objects: For what human being, past nonage, exists, who fights not for a state more durable, more perfect than this? Or who can contemplate the supreme wisdom, power and goodness, though but under the light of nature, without feeling himself strongly persuaded, that this desire, the most universal and constant in the heart of man,

“ This longing after immortality * ”

cannot have been implanted in vain?

BUT it is too late to assume the philosopher at the conclusion of my last letter.—My very last words are reserved to acquaint you

* Addison's Cato.

that

that, although, for your gratification, I have presented the above comparative state of manners, which was giving rise to so serious a tone of language, I have not done it on my own knowledge or credit ; and, that I should not have done it at all, on grounds less authentic than Mr. Creech's publication. Had I ventured myself to attempt any sketch of the manners of Edinburgh, as it must have been copied only from those of the society into which, during a visit of ten days, I was fortunate enough to be introduced, it would have been only by reverting to the first of the two periods in the preceding comparison, that you could have found the resemblance of my piece.



F I N I S.

